

A STUDY ON THE SIGNIFICANCE OF ETHNODOXOLOGY TRAINING FOR
WORSHIP LEADERS TO ACCOMPLISH THE NEED OF CONTEXTUALIZATION
OF WORSHIP IN INDIA

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To my God given companion of life, Bitha who stood with me in all ups and
downs of my life and to Julie and Timothy Tennent whom God used to change my life
and ministry.

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ABSTRACT

Although seminaries and bible colleges in India have discussed contextualization of Christian worship for the past several decades, the church in India has remained so westernized. With the significant impacts of globalization even the churches in rural areas of India are becoming more westernized. Although there were several attempts for contextualization of Christian worship, it never became a part of the Indian church. It remained as an experiment in seminaries and Christian ashrams. This thesis-project is exploring the possibilities of using the discipline of ethnomusicology, and its Christian variant ethnodoxology, as a tool to make contextualization a reality in India. This thesis-project claims that, teaching a course in ethnomusicology in theological seminaries to future pastors and worship leaders in training will make contextualization a reality at the grass-roots level and in the daily worship of the church. This thesis-project presents ethnomusicology as a tool for sustainable contextualization of Christian worship, which takes the cultural uniqueness of every people group seriously and makes the process of contextualization a peoples' movement.

CHAPTER ONE

THE NEED OF DEVELOPING INDIGENOUS WORSHIP FORMS IN INDIA

Introduction

Worship is the most important activity of the church. Christians believe that the purpose of God's creation itself was for worship. Like most of the other religious traditions Christianity has its own worship styles with cultural adaptations. Although Christianity originated in a Jewish background, it took roots in different cultures with unique cultural forms. Much of the music of the Western world is a good example of the cultural adaptation of Christianity.

According to tradition, the Christian gospel reached South India around 2000 years ago through Thomas, the disciple of Jesus. Later, there was a long chain of missionaries like William Carey and Amy Carmichael and missionary organizations like the Church Missionary Society, London Missionary Society and Basel Mission, who attempted to evangelize India. Even after this long heritage of Christianity on Indian soil, the percentage of Christian population today is only 5.84%.¹ In recent years people became more aware of this fact and attempted to find problems in the strategies of

¹ Jason Mandryk, *Operation World*, (Colorado Springs: Biblica Publishing, 2010), 407.

missions. Added to this awareness, there was a tremendous amount of writing from the Hindu world against the Western root of Indian Christianity. These factors led Indian Christianity to become aware of their Western roots, and there has been an attempt at indigenization of worship over the past 150 years. James M. L., one of the Catholic lyric writers and an exponent of indigenization of worship wrote; "Instead of preaching directly, the whole culture in India is to be evangelized, not individuals...Here in North India we feel that Christianity has to grow much in culture [through] the art forms. It's in the initial stage. A Christian art is to be developed" ²

This quote reflects the awareness and the desire of Indian Christianity to take cultural root in Indian soil. This chapter attempts to look at the problems in Indian Christian worship, and possibilities of indigenization of worship from a theological and Biblical perspective, rather than from the common notion of looking at it only from an evangelistic perspective. It also attempts to look at some of the problems of the past attempts at indigenization from a Biblical, cultural and practical perspective

Problems of Indian Christian Worship

1. Westernized Worship and Music

One of the greatest problems of the Indian Christian Church is its Western heritage. Most of the mainline denominations follow a completely Westernized liturgy

² C.H Dicran, "Hindi Christian Bhajans: A Survey Of Their Use By Christians And A Critique By Hindu Professionals In The Music World," (master's diss., Berkley College of Music. 2000), 5.

and music in their worship. When missionaries came to India they translated the Bible and hymns into the local languages for use in worship. Even a century later, the churches still use the same hymnal and translation of the *Book of Common Prayer* for worship. C. H Dicran, an American man who is professionally trained in Indian music, talks about the present day use of indigenous music in Indian churches:

At best, on any given Sunday morning, one in three hymns is an indigenous song, and many of these, though composed by Indians, are reminiscent of Western hymns. If Christian songs are composed with the intention of sounding particularly Indian (songs that sound like those used by Hindus and Muslims), they are sung only in conventions, special performances at Christmas and Easter, or for evangelistic events in the villages. They have not been welcomed as a main staple and do not come close to replacing the Western hymn in the regular worship of the church.³

Due to the linguistic limitations of the missionaries, they were not able to make a translation that fits well with the common use of the language. Due to the syllabic problems and the structure, it is almost impossible for people to understand the texts of many songs. But over the years there have been no attempts made to retranslate the *Book of Common Prayer* or the hymns, or to create a liturgy that was relevant to the Indian context. Although many Indian Christians wrote songs reflecting their theology in Indian terms, the Church very rarely took the initiative to use them in worship. Most of the use of indigenized liturgies was limited within the walls of seminaries and Ashrams. The only musical instrument that was allowed in the church was the organ, and only the Catholic, Pentecostal and Charismatic churches attempted to use some of the indigenous musical instruments for worship. During the time of Christmas, churches in South India use

³ C. H Dicran, *Hindi Christian Bhajans*, 5.

hymns that talk about winter and snow, when the temperature is 80° F and the people have never seen snow in their whole life.

2. Westernized Posture

Another significant aspect that the Indian church lost in worship was the posture of worship. In most of the Indian religions, people sit on a thick mattress spread on the floor for worship. They sit on the floor, with their legs crossed, as an expression of their respect to God. During times of prayer they stand on their knees with their heads bowed to the ground. But the Christian churches accepted the Western form of sitting on pews for worship, and neglected the culturally accepted form of sitting on the floor in respect to God. According to Indian tradition, in respect for their God, no one enters the place of worship unclean or wears their sandals. But Christian churches did not emphasize these aspects in their worship. In the mind of an Indian these are symbols of a lack of respect and devotion to God.

3. Westernized Language

Due to the linguistic limitations of the missionaries, the liturgies and the hymns that were translated by them do not match with the common usage of the language. The language that is used in the church is therefore much different from the common language. It is not unusual to see Christians being mocked by the people of other religions for the strange form of language that is used in the church. Dayanand

Bharati, a leading Christian theologian and a Hindu convert, says this about the Westernized language in church:

Where are the Christians who can speak in languages familiar to people? If a new believer ever goes to church service he cannot even understand the message, not to mention all the other activities of the church. If he wants to survive among them then he must become confirmed to the images in all the areas of his life. But the church will remain westernized and will not bother about either the new believer or the common people yet to be reached with the gospel.⁴

4. Westernized Preaching

Preaching in Indian churches is also influenced by the Western heritage. All the Indian churches are characterized by an elevated pulpit or a preaching stand. In recent years, due to the telecasting of charismatic preaching by international Christian channels, preachers tend to move around much on the platform and preach very loudly in their attempt to imitate the Christianity that is seen on television. But in Indian tradition, teachers of the scriptures sat on the floor on a slightly elevated place with the scripture open in a small book holder. The very name of Hindu scripture, *Upanishads*, describes the aspect of teaching in an Indian context. *Upanishad* means inner or mystic teaching. The term Upanishad is derived from *upa* (near), *ni* (down) and *s(h)ad* (to sit), i.e., sitting down near. Groups of pupils sit near the teacher to learn from him the secret doctrine.⁵ Although the Gospel of Jesus is not a secret teaching, it can be communicated in an Indian way. This does not match with today's Christian preaching.

44. ⁴ Dayanand Bharati, *Living Water and Indian Bowl*, (New Delhi, India: ISPCK, 1997),

⁵ *Upanishads*, accessed on June, 2005,
<http://www.hindunet.org/upanishads/index.htm>.

5. Global Media Marketing

India is a market for many international products. With electronic gadgets, automobiles and many other international products, India is pounded with global media, including Christian media. Several of the performances by Western Christian artists are presented as ideal in churches today. This not only influences the music of the church but even the attire and attitude of Christian youngsters. While none of the major religions in India are significantly influenced by this modernization movement, Christians are seriously influenced. This has resulted in casual attire and a casual attitude in worship. Large media marketing companies record and sell their CD's and DVD's in India, but several of the Indian Christian musicians, especially of minority languages, cannot afford to record their songs and distribute them at an equal level of quality. Today in many major cities of India the ideal for Christian worship is what people see in the videos of Contemporary Christian artists.

6. Limiting Contextualization to Theology

Another major issue in the contextualization of worship in India is the failure to practice it. For the past several decades Catholics as well as Protestants have discussed contextualization and published many materials in this area. But the average church member does not have much to do with the discussion on contextualization. These discussions remain academic, and never reach the ordinary members of the church.

Worship is the most congregational participatory activity of the church. Bruce Nicholls says it like this; “Worship is the deepest expression of religious world view, and both beauty and ugliness are invariably associated with it as in religious art, music and poetry. It is in worship that true contextualization ought to be more clearly seen, expressing the true adoration of God.”⁶

Unless the church’s worship is contextualized, the nature of the church will continue to remain Westernized. Worship is the core of the life of the church. The Indian church has failed to bring its contextualization attempts into the liturgy and into the life of ordinary members of the congregation.

Difficulties of Indigenization

Although indigenization of worship is a desirable aspect in the Indian context, it involves several challenges. Careless handling of these challenges has caused several theological issues over the years. Many times the struggle of dealing with these issues has prevented people from attempting indigenization of worship.

1. Isolation of Culture from Religion

Indian culture and Hindu religion are very much intermingled and it is very challenging to isolate the culture and religion in some areas. In the area of inter-religious

⁶ Bruce J. Nicholls, *Contextualization: A theology of Gospel and Culture* (British Columbia: Regent College Publishing, 1979), 62.

dialogue many people have fallen into the trap of going to extremes in their attempt to find common grounds between religions. Many attempts to indigenize Christian worship have ended up in Hinduization of worship. Many of these attempts failed due to their lack of theological and biblical rigor in adapting aspects of worship. A good understanding of the Scripture is essential before taking any steps toward cultural adaptation. In the Old Testament the people of Israel rejected several sinful elements from the Canaanite worship but accepted things like their architecture. St. Mary's church in Nagarcoil, South India, who trace their heritage to St. Thomas, is a good example for the Christian adaptation of Hindu architecture.⁷ But in the Indian context these things need to be done with very much caution.

2. Strong Roots in Westernized Christianity

Another struggle of the Indian Christian Church for indigenization is their strong roots in the Western style of worship and their state of comfort in it. Many traditional Christian churches are very comfortable in their present state, as all of them were born into it and have remained in it all of their lives. An average church member is little concerned about what is happening in the area of evangelism and never seems to address their Western identity very seriously. As Marva Dawn calls it, they are living in the idolatry of "the ways we've always done it before."⁸ Most of the churches and the

⁷ Herbert Hoefter, "The Burden of the Past," *Mission Frontiers*, Special issue (2001), 13.

⁸ Marva J. Dawn, *Reaching Out without Dumbing Down: A Theology of Worship for This Urgent Time*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm B. Eerdmans Publishing Co. 1995), 47.

believers value the Western heritage of the church over an Indian cultural heritage. Many of the churches choose organ music over indigenous instruments. There are churches who do not have a church organ but use five-octave Yamaha keyboards placed inside a wooden case that looks like an organ. For many congregations the fake appearance of an organ is so significant because of their Western heritage.

3. Lack of Trained People in Indian Music

Due to the association of the Christian church with Western culture for more than two centuries, a movement for indigenization is quite hard. Any attempt to learn Indian music and other arts, and attempts at indigenization, will be viewed with suspicion. When an individual from the West attempts to learn Indian music and culture, people take pride in it and accept him with their whole heart. But in the perspective of an Indian, Christians have already neglected Indian culture, and any Christian individual who is attempting to learn Indian music must be patient in receiving criticism from society.⁹

Another issue in this area is the problem of the association of Indian music with Hindu worship. Many traditional Christians consider Indian music as Hindu rather than Indian. Just as it is impossible to study about Western baroque music without studying about the sacred music of J. S Bach, it is impossible to study Indian classical music without studying certain Hindu worship music. This has led to many Christian

⁹ C.H Dicran, *Hindi Christian Bhajans*, 16.

families preventing their musically qualified children from learning Indian music. Instead of using Indian music, most of them are sent to learn Western music.

Most of the Indian Christian music that is coming out today is not useful for congregational singing. Most of them are replications of the fusion music of the film industry in India produced with commercial motivations.

4. Diversity of Culture and Language

Another major challenge is the diversity of Indian culture and language. There are 416¹⁰ languages and 4,635 ethnic groups in India.¹¹ This wide diversity makes it very hard for denominations to make the process of indigenization unified. Some of the aspects that are acceptable in one part of India may not be acceptable in the other parts of India. A good example of this issue is the aspect of eating meat. In states like Kerala in South India even the Hindu people eat cow meat and it is sold publicly. But in Northern parts of India it is considered as a sin and those who eat cow meat are looked down upon by others in the society.

¹⁰ K.S. Singh, *Anthropological Survey of India, 3 Vols.* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1998).

¹¹ Patrick Johnstone, *Operation World*, (Gerrard Cross, UK: WEC International, 2001), 309 – 10.

5. Limitation of Christian Publishing

Printed material carries more credibility than any other means of communication. The hesitation of publishers to produce Christian materials in Christian minority languages is another hindrance for the spread of the idea of indigenization. This issue becomes more chronic with the influence of global media culture. As Marva Dawn says, the printed page has revealed a more serious, coherent world, which was capable of management by reason and attempts to improve with criticism. But television has destroyed all the virtues associated with this former mature discourse.¹² Christian publishers in India tend to publish things either in English or in the Christian dominated languages of South India, and ignore most of the other Indian languages due to the fear of losing profit. This prevents the spread of ideas.

Music publishing in the country also is affected by the lack of willing publishers. Most of the Indian Christian music that is published is not congregational, but rather replications of the fusion music of the film industry in India. This has limited the circulation of congregational songs written by local believers.

6. Global Media Culture

Another great issue of indigenization of worship is the culture portrayed by Global media. The arrival of international television channels and the live telecast of

¹² Marva J. Dawn, *Reaching Out without Dumbing Down*, 23.

Western Christian worship is making the Western heritage even stronger, and taking the Indian church to new realms of Western Christian worship. It will not be surprising to hear the songs of present contemporary Christian artists in the worship of Indian cities. Indian families are influenced much by the television culture. Even families who struggle to meet their daily necessities do anything to own a television in their homes. *India Today* one of the leading Indian Magazine writes this; “Television is accorded priority in Indian households. Families will walk for miles from their homes to bathe and attend nature’s call, but would watch television within the confines of their home.”¹³

Failures of Past Attempts of Indigenization

1. Religious Syncretism

One of the primary problems of the past attempts at indigenization was the Hinduization of worship. In the attempt to indigenize worship, many people went to extremes by accepting Hindu religious practices without having sufficient theological foundations for doing so. Using a big bowl full of rice, using flowers from a coconut tree, applying sandal wood cream marks on their forehead etc. have theological significance in the Hindu religion, but they do not have any theological significance in Christian understanding. Dayanand Bharati writes about the extreme movements of indigenization:

Just sitting on floor and using few Indian musical instruments will not make worship indigenous. Several things have to be radically changed. In this area Roman

¹³ Rohit Saran, “*Census India Household Survey: How we Live*” *India Today* (2003) 41.

Catholics, particularly their *ashrams*, went ahead of every one to other extreme of making Christianity as another cult within Hinduism.¹⁴

Some people advocate the use of Hindu religious terminology to describe God and Holy Communion. For God they recommend terms like *Bhagavan* (Blessed Lord) or *Brahman* (Ultimate reality). They also recommend terms like *prasad* (grace) for Holy Communion. But the use of these terms only gave Christianity an appearance of Hinduism and never made it indigenous. When a common Hindu uses a terms like *Bhagavan*, *Brahma* and *prasad*, they associate it with their daily use rather than the literary meanings of the term. For a Hindu, the common understanding of the term *prasad* is merely a portion of something that is offered to the idol, which they eat or apply on their forehead. But the Christian understanding of Lord's Supper involves much deeper theology than the term *prasad* can afford, as it involves historical, theological and future hope aspects within it.¹⁵

2. Lack of Theological and Biblical Foundation

Lack of good evangelical theological foundation was another major problem of past attempts at contextualization. The statement from M. M Thomas, one of the prominent theologians from India, pictures the lack of good foundation on evangelical theology. He states; "I cannot find any difference between the accepted missionary goal of a Christian Church expressing Christ in terms of a contemporary Hindu thought and

¹⁴ Dayanand Bharati, *Living Water and Indian Bowl*, 51.

¹⁵ The Lord's Supper reminds Christians about the Old Testament foreshadow of it in Exodus 12, the last supper of Jesus with his disciples, His death and resurrection and his promise to come back.

life pattern and a Christ centered Hindu Church of Christ which transforms Hindu thought and life pattern within.”¹⁶ Statements like this by Indian Christian theologians who attempted indigenization created a suspicion in Indian mind about the whole endeavor. Many people who took leadership roles in these processes were not strong evangelical theologians but were liberals who had no biblical foundations for their attempts. Only in recent years a few evangelical Christians started taking initiative for the process of contextualization.

3. Attempt to Replace Western Music with Indian Classical Music

Another failure in the area of contextualization was the attempt to replace Western music with Indian classical music. But Indian classical music is not the music of the people. A majority of the common people in India cannot sing Indian classical music, and the attempt to replace Western music with Indian classical music was a complete failure. Several past contextualized liturgies incorporated Sanskrit songs with classical Hindustani and Carnatic music. These musical forms are very difficult compositions and were impossible for ordinary people to sing in daily worship. It is the equivalent of trying to replace Western Christian music with Western classical music.

¹⁶ “Asian Theology”, accessed on June 7, 2005, <http://mb-soft.com/believe/txo/asian.htm>.

4. Failure of Incorporating Local Leadership

Several of the indigenization movements in India were not led by local leaders. Contextualized liturgies like that of the Church of South India were initiated by Western people like Eric Lott. But as mentioned earlier, India is very diverse linguistically and culturally. Each of the 4,635 people groups in the country is different in most of the areas of their culture. Only the people of a particular people group will know their culture in its fullness, and others will have only an outsider view. Most of the past attempts did not incorporate local leaders in the process of contextualization of worship and published liturgies under the large umbrella of denominations ignoring linguistic and cultural diversities. This resulted in lack of interest in the minds of local people towards contextualized worship. Several contextualized liturgies remain unused after their publication, as they were not culturally appropriate for local congregations.

5. Lack of Training to Pastors and Worship Leaders

Another major failure of past attempts at indigenization was the lack of training for pastors and worship leaders who minister directly to local congregations. Although there were discussions at the denominational leadership level, local pastors were never taught how to proceed with the process of contextualization. As they were not educated in biblical and theological foundations and practical applications of contextualization, members of the local congregations also remained ignorant about it. That caused the process of contextualization not to take root in local churches. Pastors of

local congregations were not motivated to take contextualized worship styles into the daily life of the church. They simply chose to remain the same in their worship practices.

Possibilities of Indigenization

1. Change of Focus from Evangelism to Worship

One of the greatest needs today is the change of focus in the attempt at indigenization. All along, the primary motivation behind indigenization was to attract more people to the church. That motivation has caused the people of other religions to think that Christians are faking something to attract them to Christianity. C. H Dicran quotes Arun Shourie, one of the leading Hindu journalists in the country; “For them indigenization is only a cover-up for the age-old Christian and Western goal of world conquest.”¹⁷ Sita Ram Goel, another Hindu leader, perceives the indigenization process as “disguised in Hindu form” and “casting covetous glance before mounting a marauding expedition.”¹⁸ All the attempts of indigenization in the area of mission gave a negative picture of Christianity as a wolf disguised under a lamb skin.

This attitude will change only if the church changes from these roots. Before attempting indigenization in missions, the church’s worship must become indigenized. Over the years churches used indigenous methods to evangelize the world while keeping all the Westernized forms in worship. The perception of Arun Shorie and Sita Ram Goel

¹⁷ Dicran, *Hindi Christian Bhajans*, 11.

¹⁸ Dayanand Bharati, *Living Water and Indian Bowl*, 51

are absolutely correct when looking at the attempts of the church from any perspective. Christianity should change for the sake of worshiping God in the language and culture of the people, not just to attract people. The statement by John Piper is very significant in this regard:

Missions is not the ultimate goal of the church. Worship is. Missions exists because worship doesn't. Worship is ultimate, not missions, because God is ultimate, not man. When this age is over, and countless millions of redeemed fall on their faces before the throne of God, missions will be no more. It is a temporary necessity, but worship abides forever.¹⁹

To make indigenization true, the church needs to start with radical changes from the center, that is worship. Indigenization should take place in the primary aspects of the church's worship and life, and indigenized missions should then come very naturally from the indigenized church.

2. Change in Worship Posture

The Christian church needs to go back to Indian heritage in their worship styles. The church needs to leave their pews and follow the Indian/ Hindu style of worship by sitting on the floor and praying on their knees. This worship style has more validation in the Bible than sitting on the pews. The Hebrew and the Greek terms that are used in the Bible for worship mean prostration to the ground. According to modern scholars, the Hebrew word *hišštah^{wâ}*, which is translated as worship, literally means to

¹⁹ John Piper, "the Supremacy of God in Missions Through Worship," <http://www.missionfrontiers.org/1996/0508/ma967.htm> (accessed on April 2005).

“bend oneself over at the waist.”²⁰ Other biblical terms for worship and the images from the Biblical era prove that an Indian worship posture follows the exact meaning of the term worship.²¹ In this context it is theologically fitting to adapt a worship posture from the Hindu religion.

From the cultural perspective, this posture will be more acceptable to the new believers as they are still remaining in the cultural forms to show their homage and submission to the God. Dayanand Bharati, one of the leading Indian Christian theologians, expressed his desire for an Indian style of worship posture after attending a Westernized worship service:

There I often dreamed in this way – remove all the western musical instruments, and also even the pulpit; spread a *dari* (thick carpet) on the stage, have one *bhajan* [one form of worship music in Indian tradition] team lead in singing bhajans; how then we all could worship the Lord in spirit and truth.²²

Expressions of their homage, devotion, submission and awe in the presence of God by removing the sandals from their feet and cleansing themselves before entering the worship place are good practices that can be adapted well into the Christian context as these aspects are validated Biblically. Exodus 3:5 shows the significance of removing the sandals in the presence of God. Exodus 19:10 signifies the importance of being cleansed in the presence of God. These good elements in Hindu worship can be well interpreted in

²⁰ David Peterson, *Engaging with God: A Biblical Theology of Worship* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 1992), 57.

²¹ Daniel L. Block, *For the Glory of God: Recovering A Biblical Theology of Worship* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2014), 475 – 573 Kindle.

²² Dayanand Bharati, *Living Water and Indian Bowl*, 47.

a Christian context and will help the church and its worship to take acceptable cultural forms.

3. Change in the Language of Worship

The language of worship must become more culturally acceptable and understandable. The church needs to attempt to create a new liturgy considering cultural aspects from Indian culture. Even if the churches continue to use their Western liturgies like the *Book of Common Prayer*, it must be translated into the common language of the people. It is also possible to use terms like *krist Bhakt* (Devotee of Christ) to talk about a believer. But calling the believer a 'Hindu', as some Indian Christian theologians suggest, can give a wrong perception that the person is a follower of Christ but accepts other people who worship other gods, just as the Hindu religion allows each individual to have their own personal deity. But the use of all this kind of terminology must be accompanied with theological biblical education that validates the use of each term. It is also important to develop indigenous terminologies to teach doctrinal issues. This is possible only by emphasizing a theological education with this perspective. C. V. Mathew talks about the contribution of William Carey and his team in this area. They were able to develop certain Sanskrit terminologies for their biblical translation purposes. This provided a series of terminologies for coming generations to lead good theological debates.²³ These kinds of new movements to find possible terminologies that explain the biblical terms in their full depth must be found by the church. Using Indian terminologies to explain about

²³ C. V Mathew, *The Saffron Mission* (Delhi, India: ISPCK, 2001), 56.

God and Christian doctrines will help the people to have a better understanding of God, and that understanding will lead to better experience in worship.

4. Change in the Architecture of the Worship Place

The architecture of worship is another area that could be indigenized. Today most of the mainline Christian worship places are imitations of Western Cathedrals, while on the other extreme most of the charismatic congregations ignore the significance of good architecture altogether. Most of the churches do not have much theological understanding about the structure of places of worship. On the other hand Hindu temples and their structures carry a lot of religious significance. According to Geoffrey Parrinder, Hindu temples are constructed with very definite plans. Each aspect in the temple has some kind of religious significance.²⁴ This awareness need to be adapted to the church's architecture. Churches must be constructed in Indian architectural forms with good theological understanding of each element involved.

5. Role of Music

Music plays a very important role in the indigenization of worship. Over the years churches used Indian songs only for evangelism, and Western songs in their worship. The concept of changing from the center of Christian worship should take place

²⁴ Geoffrey Parrinder, *Worship in the World's Religion* (New York: Association press, 1961), 51.

in the music of the church. The common music styles of the people should come into Christian worship. Musical forms like *Bhajans* and *Keerthans* must come into worship. This is the music that every Indian will hear early in the morning from the temples. These forms are very simplistic in nature and are very congregational. Both these musical forms originated in the Hindu *bhakti* (Devotion) traditions and are used very commonly in Hindu worship. They can be used very easily and effectively because of their simple structure. The cantor will sing one phrase of the song and the congregation repeats the same phrase with the accompaniment of small cymbals. It can be very easily taught because of its cantor group dynamics.²⁵ This will fit very well with the biblical usage of Psalms in worship. Many of the Psalms and other biblical passages can be sung as a *bhajan* very effectively.

Another possibility is the redoing of hymn contents in Indian musical forms. Hymns and other forms of early music of the church carry a rich theology of several centuries, and they can be used effectively in Indian contexts by retranslating the hymns and giving indigenous tunes to them. The primary goal of indigenization is not to deny everything that comes from the West, but to make the worship rich by making it more culturally relevant and retaining the diversity that God intended in worship.

It is also important to make the people aware of the worth of their musical and other art forms so that they may find them meaningful in worship. Several people groups have the wrong notion that their music is not worthy to be used in worship, or their past

²⁵ Stephen F. Duncan, "A Genre of Hindusthani Music (Bhajans) as Used in the Roman Catholic Church" in GCOMM Proceedings [CD-ROM] Fort Worth, TX: Ethnodoxology, 2003.

associations make them not worthy to be used in worship. Teaching them with right biblical understanding of diverse art forms, especially music, will help them to use their art forms in worship to attain the goal of “heart worship”.

6. Role of Preaching

Preaching plays a very important role in making the gospel relevant to the people. Timothy C. Tennent talks about making the gospel culturally relevant:

The gospel is not only linguistically translatable, it is culturally translatable. The gospel is not only delivered to us in the enscriptured text, but also in the proclamation and witness of a believing community belonging to a particular culture at the particular time in history.²⁶

Preachers must understand the methods by which the gospel can be shared through culturally relevant terminology. This must be done with much caution as it is very much possible to go to the extremes in the use of terms and mislead people into wrong theological conclusions.²⁷ Scripture plays a very significant role in Hindu temple worship. There are days when they read from the scriptures continuously throughout the week. Although Hinduism does not have preaching sessions in their worship, giving importance to Scripture and doing much reading from the scriptures will make worship more culturally relevant.

²⁶ Timothy C. Tennent, *Christianity at the Religious Round Table: Evangelicalism in Conversation with Hinduism, Buddhism, and Islam*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2002), 195.

²⁷ Dayanand Bharati, *Living Water and Indian Bowl*, 63.

The posture of preaching also must change. There are many references in Scripture where Jesus sat and taught people about the Kingdom of God. This form of teaching will be more acceptable in the Indian context than preaching from the pulpit. Dayanand Bharati suggests an Indian form of preaching style for worship and missions. Even in the mission fields during the service and gospel meetings, it is better to sit and preach. It not only gives a nice indigenous look but also helps to conduct *satsangh* [fellowship of the believers] as Hindus usually do.²⁸

7. Whole of Life as Worship

Dayanand Bharati, a convert from high caste Brahmanism, talks about Indian and Hindu attitudes toward worship like this; “Worship is the pivot on which the entire spiritual life revolves, particularly for Hindus. They never worship just three hours [Sunday worship usually lasts three hours] in a week plus (bonus) one cottage prayer meeting. Hinduism is not a Sunday church devotion”²⁹

This concept of Indian and Hindu understanding can be transferred well into the biblical Christian understanding of the whole of life as worship. Most of the Hindu people in India are very used to having *pooja* (prayers) early in the morning at their home or in the temple. They can continue this good habit even as a Christian believer as it is well confirmed by biblical teachings.

²⁸ Dayanand Bharati, *Living Water and Indian Bowl*, 44.

²⁹ Dayanand Bharati, *Living Water and Indian Bowl*, 46.

Family plays a very important role in the religious life of India. Every devoted Hindu family starts their day by cleansing themselves and doing *pooja* (prayers) in the small worship place built into their house. This concept also can be transferred well in the Indian context by emphasizing the importance of family worship and prayer at their homes. In that way whole of life can be emphasized as worship.

8. Educating Pastors and Worship Leaders

One of the major steps to take in contextualization is to train local leadership in the concepts of contextualization and involve them in the process of doing it. There should be a significant amount of training given to leaders at the local level, and there should be trained experts to walk them through the process of contextualization until they are capable of doing it for themselves. They should be given solid teaching on the need of contextualization, cultural diversity and the biblical foundations of contextualization. Unless local pastors, worship leaders and the leadership of the church are equipped to sustain the process of contextualization, contextualization of worship can never be a reality in India.

Future of Contextualization of Worship – Hypothesis

Since 1962 the Catholic Church, and a few decades later protestant denominations, have been discussing contextualization. But in India it has remained in Ashrams, Seminaries and Synod meetings. To a large extent it failed to be a movement of

local congregations. One of the major reasons was the failure of making it a people's movement. On many occasions these attempts were initiated by people outside a particular cultural context, who had no understanding of the 4,693 people groups in the country. Several of the past attempts focused on a large geographical area comprised of hundreds of people groups, each with unique cultural practices. Contextualized liturgies that ignored their cultural particularities were as alien as Western worship forms. So they continued to remain Westernized.

This scenario brings the attention to the academic discipline of Ethnomusicology. It is an area of study that originated in the 1900's, and this particular terminology was introduced by Jaap Kunst in a little book called *Musicologica*.³⁰ Later in late 1990's Dave Hall introduced Christian ethnomusicology study with the title *Ethnodoxology*. These areas of studies focus on people in their contexts and attempt to study them at the grass roots level. They primarily study music and other art forms in the context of the people, and encourages them to continue to be creative according to their cultural background. This area of study can make contextualization of worship culturally appropriate, and also a people movement. Ethnodoxology is interested in the smallest divisions in a society, and studies their culture in their context. It focuses on bringing out an insider perspective on their diverse art forms, and encourages creative utilization of their appropriate art forms for the worship of God. Ethnodoxology methods make it a people's movement and involve significant congregational participation. It is also a movement within a culture by the people of the culture, and can be more appropriate and

³⁰ S.A.K Durga. *Ethnomusicology: A study of Intercultural Musicology*, (Delhi, India: B.R Rhythms, 2004), 2.

meaningful for that particular people group. This thesis project attempts to explore the possibility of using ethnomusicology as a tool for contextualization of worship in India. The attempt is to conduct a study by teaching a course in ethnomusicology at the music department of Luther W. New Theological College, Dehradun, India, with the goal of evaluating the impacts of the course upon the students who attended.

Conclusion

There are several biblical passages in which the diversity of the people group has been given much importance. Philippians 2:11 is talking about worship from every tongue. It refers to worship from people groups. In Daniel 7:14 the prophet describes his vision about all peoples, nations, and men of every language worshipping the Son of Man. These passages very clearly explain the diversity that is alive in worshipping God. John Piper translates Revelation 21:3 with emphasis on “people” like this; “Behold the dwelling of God is with men, and he will dwell with them and they will be his peoples (emphasis added).” Piper argues that the redeemed gathered from every tribe, language, people and nation (Rev 5:9) will be preserved in diversity.³¹

Indigenization of worship must be done with caution and in integrity with the Word of God. Lack of biblical and theological understanding can result in grave dangers. It is not an attempt to appear like other religions of the country or to compromise with other religious faiths. In the words of Dayanand Bharati “Contextualization is not

³¹ Dianne Palmer Quay, *Developing Indigenous Hymnody: Key resource for Cross-cultural workers* (n.p: Dianne Palmer Quay Publishing house, 1999), 3.

compromise, not conforming to the image of the world, but rather allowing the gospel to become incarnate in the existing culture in faithfulness to the Bible.”³²

The words of Marva Dawn are a good criteria to evaluate our attempts for indigenization; “We make use of the cultural forms, new and old, but we dare never let up in the struggle to make sure they are consistent with the ultimate eternal world to which we belong.”³³

³² Dayanand Bharati, *Living Water and Indian Bowl*, 48.

³³ Marva J. Dawn, *Reaching Out without Dumbing Down: A Theology of Worship for This Urgent Time*, (Grand Rapids, MI: W. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co. 1995), 10.

CHAPTER TWO

BIBLICAL FOUNDATIONS OF CONTEXTUALIZATION AND ETHNODOXOLOGY

Introduction

Contextualization of Christian worship has been a topic of discussion for the past several decades in India. One of the major drawbacks of contextualization of worship in India is the lack of a solid biblical foundation. Most of the exponents of contextualization were liberal theologians and theological seminaries. Several of these leaders gave culture the priority over the scriptural understanding of worship, which resulted in religious syncretism in worship. Many of these groups attempted to appear like Hindus and patterned their worship according to Hindu religious practices, without carefully laying their foundations of worship on biblical teaching. Many books that were written on contextualization do not even have a biblical reference to validate the contextualized worship patterns. One of the major reasons for evangelicals to abstain from the discussions on contextualization and also from its practice was primarily due to the lack of biblical foundations. It was always seen as an act of few theological seminaries or so called Christian Ashrams, especially those led by liberal theologians. This chapter focuses on laying a biblical foundation for contextualization of Christian worship and ethnodoxology. The goal of the paper is to understand contextualization of

Christian worship as a foundational teaching of the Bible and also as an act of God, rather than an act of people outside biblical teachings. It also attempts to present the principles of ethnodoxology as a biblically founded method.

Many Christians in this generation have much difficulty thinking of Christianity, especially Christian worship, without Western forms. Even the people outside Christian circles in India have difficulty perceiving Christianity outside its Western heritage. According to Dr. Timothy Tennent there is no such a thing as a Christian culture. He says:

The important point to recognize is that despite what it feels like when a Christian is living in the midst of a particular cultural and geographical advance, if you step back and look at the whole picture of Christian history, you must conclude that there is no such thing as a particular Christian culture or Christian civilization.¹

While religions like Islam and Hinduism require the converts of diverse regions to adhere to the culture of the religion's origin,² Christianity expects its believers to preserve their own cultural identity. Differently from the Old Testament, Christianity does not require adherence to one particular cultural format of worship. The silence of the New Testament on the structure and conduct of worship can be perceived as a validation for the culturally appropriate design of Christian worship.

Scripture prescribes no one monolithic form or language of worship. Biblical worship practice was diverse, reflecting the various cultural and apologetic environments of those gathered. We do not find any liturgical order or obligatory form for Christian worship in the teachings of Christ or the writings of the New Testament. It was a

¹ Timothy C. Tennent, *Theology in the Context of World Christianity: How the Global Church is influencing the way we think about and discuss theology* (Grand Rapids MI: Zondervan, 2007), 2.

² Tennent, *Theology in the Context of World Christianity*, 3.

matter of course for each group to worship in a style and environment that met their felt needs.³

The Bible provides several validations for the development of culturally ‘appropriate’⁴ worship. Diverse worship structures that we see in the Scripture need not be understood as restrictive and limiting norms, but rather as guidelines to structure worship in local settings.⁵ If we look at the Bible from a cultural perspective, it can be seen as a document in which God contextualizes Kingdom truths in human language. The purpose of this paper is to present the Bible as a contextualized document designed by God, and the author of the paper is intending to draw attention to a few examples from different sections of the bible to affirm this point. This paper is not designed as an exhaustive study on biblical contextualization.

Contextualization in the Old Testament

The Old Testament is a document that narrates God’s revelation in a particular culture at a particular time period in history. It clearly describes the struggle of the people of God in obeying the commandments of Yahweh, and exists in their particular cultural background surrounded by influences from other cultures. According to the perspective of Bruce J Nicholls, the Old Testament to a large extent is the record of the struggle

³ Pedrito U. Maynard-Reid, *Diverse Worship: African- American, Caribbean & Hispanic Perspective* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2000), 19.

⁴ Charles H. Kraft, “Why Appropriate” in *Appropriate Christianity*, ed. Charles F. Kraft (California: William Carey Publishing, 2005), 4.

⁵ Maynard-Reid, *Diverse Worship*, 19.

against the syncretistic tendency of the Baalization of Yahweh worship.⁶ The culture of the Hebrews was not the product of their environment but was the interaction of the supra-cultural and the Hebrews in their environment and history. The Word of God changes the direction of culture and transforms it.⁷

The formation of Jewish worship can be understood as an interaction between the instructions from Yahweh regarding worshipping him and how cultural elements were used by Yahweh in making it appropriate to their particular culture. Israel had several elements in their religious life that were adapted from their surrounding cultures.

The Old Testament reflects the profound interaction of the supra-cultural revealed Word and the cultural life of the Hebrews and those surrounding nations. In the formation of the covenanted people as “my people” God transformed some of these cultural forms such as circumcision to his purposes and rejected others such as idolatry.⁸

Festivals played an important part in the life of Hebrew people and are a good example for patterning worshipping according to their culture. The information that is available today regarding the culture of the Ancient Near East points to the fact that these festivals and sacrifices were not limited to the liturgical life of the Hebrew community. Although the religious practices of Hebrews were unique on one side, there were considerable similarities with the religious practices of other surrounding communities.⁹

⁶ Bruce J. Nicholls, *Contextualization: A theology of Gospel and Culture* (British Columbia: Regent College Publishing, 1979), 47

⁷ Bruce J. Nicholls, *Contextualization*, 13

⁸ Bruce J. Nicholls, *Contextualization*, 46

⁹ Maynard-Reid, *Diverse Worship*, 20.

Feasts and festivals played a prominent role in the liturgical life of the Hebrew people. These (as well as sacrifices) were also staples in the liturgical life of the other peoples of the ancient Near East. The Israelites endeavored to keep their worship and celebrations different from those of the surrounding nations, yet in some ways, they were similar.¹⁰

By the time of Davidic reign, instrumental music was an important part of cultural self-expression. David who understood the significance of self-expression in worship incorporated instrumental music into worship.¹¹ The instruments that were used for worship were mostly the instruments that originated in their region. Some of the instruments like the *kinnor* were used by other religious groups as well.

The Book of Psalms is one of the most significant cultural poetic expressions of worshiping God. It was originated in the midst of a worshiping community, created by most skillful artists. It was created to lead the people of God in diverse expressions of worship.¹² The structure of Psalms shows that they originated within the culture. It was constructed in the traditional Jewish poetic format of the time. It was written in the poetic format that people were familiar with, and was very appropriate for congregational singing.

¹⁰ Maynard-Reid, *Diverse Worship*, 20.

¹¹ Maynard-Reid, *Diverse Worship*, 21

¹² Emily R. Brinks, "The Significance of Beauty and Excellence in Biblical Worship", in *Worship and Missions for the Global Church: An Ethnodoxology Handbook*, ed. James Krabill (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 2013) 11.

Contextualization in the New Testament

The use of culturally appropriate communication is most clearly seen in the teachings of Jesus. It is most evident in the storytelling part of Jesus' teachings. The imageries Jesus used were from the context of Jewish daily life. He told the story of a prodigal son and loving father in the context of a patristic society in which father and son played an important role in family life. He used the imagery of sheep and the shepherd, which was very a familiar picture in Hebraic daily community living.

Using culturally appropriate forms of communication is also seen in the writings of the authors of the Bible. Each of the New Testament authors led by the Holy Spirit used culturally appropriate linguistic style, vocabulary and even content to communicate to their particular target audience.

In the New Testament era, the biblical writers, whose authority and message belonged to the apostolic tradition of the primitive church, wrote from within a Hebrew cultural framework. However, in the fulfillment of the Lord's commission to communicate the gospel to the whole world, which included Hellenistic as well as Judaistic cultures, the New Testament writers utilized contemporary forms of religious expressions as modes of communication. They adopted and transformed some Hellenistic and pagan language forms and rejected others.¹³

As Bruce Nicholls very well describes, the New Testament writers did not adopt everything that existed in the culture. They adopted only those things that could be transformed and appropriated for a biblical purpose. For example, words like *eros*, that refers to sensual love, was rejected by biblical writers, while words like *mythos* and *daimon* were used in a negative sense. They also used words that were common to both Septuagint and Hellenistic philosophy such as *Kyrios* and *Soter* in ways that were

¹³ Nicholls, *Contextualization*, 47-48.

appropriate with Old Testament usage. Some words like *mysterion* were used by New Testament writers in a totally new setting compared to Hellenistic usage.¹⁴ In other words, they were primarily focused on being true to the teachings of Jesus rather than being focused on cultural adaptation.

Although the Old Testament gives very detailed description regarding the conduct of worship, the New Testament remains very silent in this aspect. There are very few passages in the New Testament that talk about the conduct of worship. None of those can be adapted as instruction for the structure of Christian gathering. One of the reasons for this can be because the New Testament books were all written in an early stage of the growth of Christianity. The church was still in the early stages of its growth and was under persecution. On the other hand, it can be perceived as a sign of the freedom of individual local worship gatherings. John Piper says this regarding the silence of the New Testament regarding the structure of worship:

Worship in the New Testament, in short, moves toward something radically simple and inward, with manifold external expressions in life and liturgy. One of the reasons for this stunning indifference to outward form is a vision for missions that is usable across thousands of cultures and therefore not to be laden with externals.¹⁵

It can be seen as the design of God to have freedom of worshipping God with any language, style, music, instruments or any other art forms. God's eternal plan of blessing the nations and gathering them from every tongue and tribe is inaugurated with the New Testament through the church. In other words, the universality of the Gospel is

¹⁴ Nicholls, *Contextualization*, 48.

¹⁵ John Piper, "The Missional Impulse Toward Incarnational Worship in the New Testament" in *Worship and Missions for the Global Church: An Ethnodoxology Handbook*, ed. James Krabill (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 2013) 101.

most clearly described in the silence of the New Testament regarding a particular structure of worship. This aspect can be understood by looking at descriptions of worship in different churches in the New Testament and in the later history of the church. Local churches grew with diverse forms of worship in different localities but remained in unity as one church. “The New Testament Church exhibited a diversity of structures and worship pattern. There seems to have been considerable flexibility, for example, in offices and leadership functions. It is not surprising that throughout history the church has known a variety of forms.”¹⁶

The design of the church and its worship was intended to be accessible to the most ordinary people in society. The teachings of Jesus and the early apostles point to the fact that the church was a movement designed for the most ordinary in the community. Timothy Tennent refers to the studies of A.T Robertson and Adolf Diessmann to say that, *Koine Greek* in which the New Testament was written was not any specialized language. It was the language of the first century market place. According to Timothy Tennent that shows that God was not merely willing to speak but was willing to speak in the language of the streets.¹⁷ The church was to be a gathering of ordinary people who believed in the simple Gospel of Jesus Christ, who worshiped him in ordinary languages, and used local music and other art forms.

¹⁶ Roger E. Hedlund, *Quest for Identity: Indian's Churches of Indigenous Origin: The "Little Tradition" in Indian Christianity*, (New Delhi: ISPCK, 2000), 27.

¹⁷ Timothy C. Tennent, *Invitation to World Missions: A Trinitarian Missiology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 2010), 85.

Timothy Tennent also points out the difference between the Christian's primary religious document and that of other religions. While the documents of all other world religions are in the language of their founders, the primary document of Christianity is in *Koine Greek* although Christ spoke Aramaic.¹⁸ The very design of the primary document of Christianity was intended for the grass roots level people of the streets of the Greco-Roman world. In a similar fashion, the worship of the church must be congregational, which facilitates the participation of every member who is present.

Contextualization in the Gospels

The gospels very clearly point to the fact that Christ did not exist merely as an abstract. He lived fully as any other Jewish male of his time.¹⁹ The life of Christ presented in the Gospels can be seen as a foundational principle and model for contextualization. He lived in a particular culture, at a particular time, under a particular rule as a member of a particular people group so that he could preach the Gospel to them. He communicated using their language and other artistic expression. He used examples from their community to explain kingdom principles. The life of Jesus can be viewed as the best model for contextualization. Timothy Tennent talks about the incarnation like this:

Christ's entry into the world and taking on "the very nature of servant," as the hymn reminds us, serves to destigmatize all cultures, making the whole world a potential extension of the in breaking kingdom. If the Son of God could enter into the

¹⁸ Timothy C. Tennent, *Invitation to World Missions*, 85

¹⁹ Timothy C. Tennent, *Invitation to World Missions*, 163.

backwaters of an oppressed, despised people living on the margins of the first-century empire, then, by extension, the gospel can enter with confidence into any and every culture. This is the theological basis for the whole field of contextualization.²⁰

The very reason for the existence of four Gospels in the Bible itself is to contextualize the story of Jesus to different readers of the Gospels.²¹ Each of the authors of the four Gospels had different audiences in their mind when they wrote their narrative on the life of Jesus. Matthew's Jewish orientation is reflected in his emphasis on messianic prophecy, kingship, the divine titles of Jesus, and Aramaisms that characterized his Jewish-Greek language.²² In the prologue of John's gospel he uses the philosophical term *logos* as the starting point and reorients it to make it consistent with biblical revelation to make it relevant to his audience.²³ Dean Gilliland says this on incarnation:

... *communication* was at the very center of what was meant by *logos*. John the apostle went beyond what was usually associated with the term when spoke of *logos* as Word, making the association with Jesus (John 1:1-14). ... John uses the *logos* idea in contextually, dynamic way never known before.²⁴

The very existence of four gospels points to the fact that God expects to communicate His gospel in heart language and in the most understandable way.

²⁰ Timothy C. Tennent, *Invitation to World Missions*, 86.

²¹ Evelyn Montario, SC. *Church and Culture: Communion in Pluralism* (Delhi: ISPCK, 2004), 77.

²² David J. Hesselgrave and Edward Rommen, *Contextualization: Meaning, Methods and Models*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1992), 8.

²³ Timothy C. Tennent, *Invitation to World Missions*, 332.

²⁴ Dean S. Gilliland, "The Incarnation as Matrix for Appropriate Theologies" in *Appropriate Christianity*, ed. Charles F. Kraft (California: William Carey Publishing, 2005), 316.

In the Bible we see the authors using several culturally relevant imageries to bring understanding to people. One of the good examples is seen in John 1:29 when John the Baptist says; “behold the Lamb of God that takes away the sins of the world.” This imagery was understandable only to a Jewish audience who were familiar with the Jewish Passover feast.²⁵ Charles E. Van Engen says this; “The incarnation is a basic element in the gospel. Since the Word became man, the only possible communication of the gospel is that in which the gospel becomes incarnate in culture in order to put itself within the reach of man as cultural being.”²⁶ The Gospels very clearly talk about Jesus’ participation in the culture as a man from the community. As the founder, leader and high priest of the worshiping community, Jesus set an example for us on how to be the church in the world. Charles Kraft says it like this:

We believe that God wants His Church incarnated in the cultural way of life of every society (people group). Just as Jesus totally participated in first century Palestinian life, not as a foreigner but as a native son, so contemporary Christian communities should not be living like foreigners in their own lands, speaking their language with a foreign (usually Western) accent, performing foreign-looking rituals at strange times and in strange-looking places.²⁷

It is very evident in the gospel narrative of the life and ministry of Jesus that God expects his church to be indigenous and relevant in every local culture. As the founder of the church, Jesus set an example for the church in every time and place to be contextualized in its wholistic existence.

²⁵ Timothy C. Tennent, *Invitation to World Missions*, 326.

²⁶ Charles E. Van Engen, “Five Perspectives on Contextually Appropriate Missional Theology” in *Appropriate Christianity*, ed. Charles F. Kraft (California: William Carey Publishing, 2005), 4.

²⁷ Charles H. Kraft, “Why Appropriate”, 12.

Contextualization in Acts

As the church started growing outside Jerusalem, the community of those who worshiped Jesus became more diverse. At the early stages the converts were required to abide by the Jewish cultural and social practices. But soon the Jerusalem Council in Acts 15 gathered together and decided that the followers of Jesus do not need to leave their culture to be a part of the church. The church had to find ways to live by keeping unity in the midst of diversity.²⁸ “There was a diversity of worship patterns in the very early church, including patterns that were traditional and culturally Jewish, and new forms created to meet the needs of an emerging pluralistic community.”²⁹

Acts 11 records the preaching of the unnamed disciples in Cyprus and Cyrene to Gentiles who had no prior familiarity with Judaism. Acts 11:20 records the important transition from preaching *Jesus Christ* – which was understandable to a Jewish audience – to preaching the *Lord Jesus*. This points to the fact that the early Christians very well understood that the title *Messiah* in Hebrew and *Christ* in Greek would not be understood well by pagan Greeks. The term *kurios* was well understood by pagan Greeks as it was a name given to their deities. Paul followed this example by using the term *Messiah* while preaching to the Jews, and avoiding using it while preaching to the Gentiles.³⁰

Another example for contextualization can be seen in Pauline preaching at the Areopagus. As his audience were Greeks, rather than quoting from Jewish Scriptures

²⁸ Timothy C. Tennent, *Invitation to World Missions*, 87.

²⁹ Maynard-Reid, *Diverse Worship*, 23.

³⁰ Timothy C. Tennent, *Invitation to World Missions*, 328.

with which he was most familiar, he quotes the Athenians' own Greek poets. Although Epimenides and Aratus were pagan poets, whose poetry was in praise of Zeus, Paul boldly quoted and applied it to Jesus in inviting pagans to receive the gospel. According to Timothy Tennent, if Paul was preaching on the banks of the river Ganges in Varanasi, he would have quoted poets like Tukaram who wrote poetry about internal purity.³¹

Contextualization in the Epistles

There are several passages in the New Testament that point to the contextual design of the church and its worship. The content of the epistles in general regards how local congregations in different regions of the New Testament world dealt with different issues from the context of their existence. "The New Testament itself makes it clear that there have been from the very beginning sharp differences among Christians about how to relate to surrounding culture. The passages in epistles to the Romans and to the Corinthians referring to the controversies about food offered to idols are ample evidence of this."³²

Pauline epistles point towards Paul as a contextual theologian. Paul has been compared to a jazz musician who improvises theologically according to changing circumstances.³³ The Pauline letters describe how the gospel intersected with the concrete

³¹ Timothy C. Tennent, *Invitation to World Missions*, 328.

³² Leslie Newbegin, *The Gospel in a Pluralistic Society*, (MI: Wm. B Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1989) 148.

³³ Dean Fleming, *Contextualization in the New Testament*, (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 2005). 111.

lives and cultures of his hearers. When he attempted to contextualize the initial gospel message and also his theology for the particular community that he was dealing with, he had a clear picture of the normative and transcultural aspects of the gospel message.³⁴ Pauline understanding of contextualization very clearly points to the fact that there are elements in Christian worship that are not changeable according to the context, while there are other aspects that can be contextualized. Pauline contextualization is clearly seen in the richness of vocabulary he uses to describe theological truths. Instead of having a fixed theological vocabulary he uses a kaleidoscope of metaphors and symbols to communicate meaning.³⁵

For Romans and the Galatians, the theme “righteousness” is crucial to Paul’s exposition of the gospel. In 1 Corinthians he turns to other symbols, such as the cross, wisdom, and body of Christ. . . . Contextual needs in Thessalonica prompt him to focus on the second coming and sanctification. In Philippians Paul draws upon political language that benefits a Roman colony ... The result is a distinctive exposition of the abiding gospel that addresses the need of the audience.³⁶

Although Paul was cautious about the context to which he was communicating, he was never completely driven by it. His contextually appropriate theological reflections were directed by the gospel rather than his audience. He was always God centered in his approach rather than being anthropocentric. His anchoring on the gospel directed his thoughts in a contextually appropriate manner.³⁷ In the Indian context in the past decades of discussions on contextualization, focus was on the people rather than the gospel.

³⁴ Dean Fleming, *Contextualization in the New Testament*, 89.

³⁵ Dean Fleming, *Contextualization in the New Testament*, 106.

³⁶ Dean Fleming, *Contextualization in the New Testament*, 108-109.

³⁷ Dean Fleming, *Contextualization in the New Testament*, 112.

Significant interest and focus was given to make Christianity appropriate for people. It was least Scripture centered and was primarily people centered. With no anchoring in biblical teaching, several of the past attempts at contextualization resulted in religious syncretism. The Pauline example of contextualization is an excellent model for evangelicals to follow in this generation.

Contextualization in the Book of Revelation

The book of Revelation is also a contextualized book of the New Testament. The contextualization methods of this book carry more significance for Asian countries because it was originally written to seven churches in Asia. The primary context of writing this book arose from their contextual situation. This book was written in the time of Emperor Domitian (A.D 81 – 96), when the imperial cult had a great influence in the daily life of the society. Jewish societies of that time were partly exempted from emperor worship. The early Christian community also enjoyed this freedom. But soon Jewish people denounced Christians to the Romans and denied the association of Christianity with Judaism. This caused the Christians to lose their religious freedom.³⁸

Secondly, Christians faced the daily challenge of being a part of Roman social and community life, which was significantly influenced by emperor worship and worship of other gods. It was almost impossible to live a public life without being a part of

³⁸ Dean Fleming, *Contextualization in the New Testament*, 266 - 267.

community activities that were filled with religious rituals. Refusal to take part in these activities was considered disloyal and unpatriotic.³⁹

This context can be very well connected with the situation in India. Recent political scenarios demand that all Indians should be Hindus. In Hindu religious understanding, being an Indian is to live as a Hindu. Hinduism with its ability to swallow any other religion and make it a part of Hinduism requires Christianity also to be a part of Hindu religion, affirming Jesus as one of the *avatara* (incarnations). Many Christian religious groups have yielded to this and become Christ believing sects which worship Jesus as *Ishta Devata* (favorite God), and remain within Hinduism. But to Christians who want to hold on to the uniqueness of Christ and affirm him as the only way to God the contextualized message of the Book of Revelation is significant.

While the book of Revelation is a contextualized message to different churches dealing with their issues in different contexts, it also challenges the demands of dominant culture upon the early Christians to live according to that culture. For Evangelicals, contextualization does not mean to live according to the dominant culture of the early church, but rather to live and worship the Lord in the most contextually appropriate way that is validated by Scripture. It is not the culture that plays the dominant role but the Word of God. It is not anthropology centered but theology centered.

While the Book of Revelation addresses the issues of particular churches, it also is a prophetic book which talks about the age to come. The book of Revelation clearly talks about preservation of distinctive cultures in the Kingdom of God. It does not

³⁹ Dean Fleming, *Contextualization in the New Testament*, 267.

teach the cultural uniqueness of different people group as a temporary aspect. The book of Revelation points to the fact that cultural diversity will be preserved in eternity.

In Revelation 7:11 we see a picture of worship in heaven. It is not a picture of one, non-distinctive super culture. Rather, John makes the observation that this array of peoples is from every nation, tribe and language. This sight gives us the assurance that God has prepared worshipers from every nation, tribe and language. Now we must simply call them to fulfill their God-given purpose. No wonder the psalmist was confident to proclaim, "Let the nations praise you, O God!"⁴⁰

The Biblical Foundation of Ethnodoxology

The discipline of ethnodoxology is not something that arose outside biblical teaching. Although it is founded heavily on the secular discipline of ethnomusicology, ethnodoxology is built on a biblical foundation as well. It is founded on the very person and work of Christ. Ian Collinge says this:

The person and work of Christ are central to Ethnodoxology because incarnation and mission of Christ are its models. . . Christ's incarnation has long been a key paradigm for Christian mission; as the apostle of our faith, he "became flesh and lived for a while among us (Jn. 1:14a) speaking the language of the people and using their cultural expressions. These became means of divine revelation (Jn 1:14, Heb. 1: 2-3). In this sense, Christ is the exponent par excellence of Ethnodoxology."⁴¹

The purpose of ethnodoxology is doxology. The field now includes diverse art forms like drama, dance storytelling, worship studies, translation, literacy, development and missiology and music.⁴² Dave Hall, who coined the word ethnodoxology, defines the

⁴⁰ Tom Pelton, "Calling People to Worship Jesus," *Mission Frontier*, July – August 1996 [Journal on-line]; available from <http://www.missionfrontiers.org/issue/article/calling-all-peoples-to-worship-jesus>; Internet.

⁴¹ Ian Collinge, "A Kaleidoscope of Doxology: Exploring Ethnodoxology and Theology", *Doon Theological Journal*, Vol. 8, No.1, March (2011) 40.

⁴² Ian Collinge, "A Kaleidoscope of Doxology", 40.

area of study like this; “Ethnodoxology is the study of the worship of God among other cultures. [It is the] theological and practical study of how and why people of diverse cultures worship the true and living God.”⁴³ Ian Collinge, an ethnomusicologist specialized in Tibetan music, defines ethnodoxology like this; “Ethnodoxology is the theological and anthropological study, and practical application, of how every people group might use their culture’s unique and diverse artistic expressions appropriately to worship the God of the Bible.”⁴⁴

Ethnodoxology exists to assist the church in her witness, nurture and worship. It is greatly inspired by John’s vision of the eternal kingdom (Rev. 5:8-9, 7:9-12), where praise is offered by believers from every ethnic group and where every best of human culture is celebrated: “The glory and honour of the nations will be brought” into the eternal city, and “nothing impure will ever enter it” (Rev. 21: 26-27).⁴⁵

According to Ian Collinge, ethnodoxology and theology share several common concerns. Theology provides the content and ethnodoxology opens up culturally appropriate ways of expressing Christian truth. The ultimate purpose of both disciplines is doxology, the praise and glory of God. Ethnodoxology is interested in every ethnic group, and the unique offering of even the smallest tribes are greeted with delight.⁴⁶

In particular, the two disciplines [ethnomusicology and Ethnodoxology] share anthropology’s ‘participant observation’ method, involving extensive residence in a chosen community, learning to perform the music, and seeking to gain as much of an insider perspective as possible. This attention to culture members’ view is what gives Ethnodoxology such insight into forms that the local church might use.⁴⁷

⁴³ Dave Hall, “Centrality of worship” *Mission Frontiers*, Vol. 23 No.2, June (2001):29

⁴⁴ Ian Collinge, “A Kaleidoscope of Doxology”, 37.

⁴⁵ Ian Collinge, “A Kaleidoscope of Doxology”, 55.

⁴⁶ Ian Collinge, “A Kaleidoscope of Doxology”, 37.

⁴⁷ Ian Collinge, “A Kaleidoscope of Doxology”, 41.

Ethnodoxologists give much significance to the ‘heart music of a particular worshipping community. Tom Avery in his article “music of the heart” describes heart music like this:

The heart music of the people is usually the traditional music of that group. It is the music which they have heard and participated in as children and young people. We are told that music is even experienced prenatally. A musical style associated with the warmth and safety of mother’s womb must have profound emotional association with that most secure period of a person’s life.⁴⁸

The concept of the significance of heart music can be perceived as biblical as well. David’s choice of music for Saul and its effect in 1 Samuel 16:23 is a good example of the power of heart music. In 2 Kings 3:14 – 16 we see Elisha using appropriate music as an aid to listen to God’s word.⁴⁹ Both these instances can be perceived as powerful examples of using appropriate music that speak to the heart.

The Bible presents God as a creative God who enjoys his creativity and appreciates it. There are several passages in the Bible that talk about the beauty of God’s creativity and praising him as a creative God. It is also very evident that God expects human beings to be creative in worshipping as well. There are several passages like Psalms 96 and 98 and Isaiah 42:10 that talk about singing new songs to the Lord. These can be understood as God’s call for his people’s creative worship. As the Westminster Catechism teaches, the chief end of man is to glorify God, and that involves the whole of man’s humanity including his creativity. The Bible gives us information about several artists who were used by God. Several of the biblical characters were skilled in diverse art forms. The Lausanne occasion paper ‘Redeeming arts’ says this:

⁴⁸ Ian Collinge, “A Kaleidoscope of Doxology”, 43

⁴⁹ Ian Collinge, “A Kaleidoscope of Doxology”, 45.

We discover David the musician, dancer, and poet and Nathan the prophet and storyteller; the imaginative visioning of Elijah and Elisha, of Jeremiah and Ezekiel—imagination not limited by circumstances, but able to see beyond the difficulties of the present to what has been promised; the memorable poetic images of Joel, Amos, and Habakkuk and the attention-getting street theatre of the prophets. Biblical accounts of festival and ceremony (which included music, dance, and poetry) speak of the need for creative celebration with rituals and symbols that bond the people of God to their story.⁵⁰

We also find that whenever people were involved in creativity to glorify God in the Bible, it was always authentic to their community. We do not find people using borrowed materials from other cultures to worship the Lord, unless they were evolved into the culture. Worship of God was always conducted in culturally appropriate forms of music and other arts. Ethnodoxology deals with understanding appropriate art forms for worship, giving attention to even the smallest divisions within a society. It acknowledges the beauty of God's creative diversity even in creating and making a particular people group unique with their diverse musical and other artistic forms. It encourages and facilitates the use of these art forms in the worship of the Lord. Different from past attempts of contextualizing the worship with large communities in mind, ethnodoxology deals with the smallest divisions of society. It focuses in local churches and facilitates contextualization of worship by encouraging the community members to be creative – which is appropriate to their culture and appropriate with biblical foundations of worship – in worshipping the living God.

Although music is a powerful tool, all human arts are marred by sin and are heavily used for sinful purposes. Ian Collinge says this; “This is the problem that the

⁵⁰ David Claydon, ed., “Redeeming the Arts: The Restoration of the Arts to God's Creational Intention,” Lausanne Occasional paper, (Pattaya, Thailand: Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization), 2005, available on http://www.lausanne.org/docs/2004forum/LOP46_IG17.pdf, Internet.

Church has always had with arts. From Bible times, arts were not only used by God's Spirit, they were also misused, both as distraction from obedience and justice (Amos 5:22-24) and in overt idolatry."⁵¹

Evangelicals have always had a negative perspective on certain musical instruments and musical forms, especially indigenous music that is used for other purposes. In India, the church especially has kept a very negative approach to indigenous instruments like the Sitar, Veena, Tambura and many others. The church perceived the organ as the only musical instrument that is worthy to be used in worship of God. The shape and sound of the organ took on such a serious religious significance that churches that could not afford to buy organs purchased five-octave keyboards and hid them in cabinets that looked like an organ. Ethnodoxologists Tom Avery and Paul Neely say:

No musical instrument is inherently godly or pagan. Nor does any instrument produce sounds that are inherently evil or good, nor can the sound of any instrument cause us to behave in a certain way unless our will is already set in that direction. The sound of an instrument can help to set up emotional moods, to be sure, but the connection between emotions and instrumental sounds is culture-bound and context-bound.⁵²

According to Roland Allen who is a scholar of Hebrew Scripture, the *Kinnor*, one of the prominent Old Testament instruments has a long history of use and misuse in pagan circles before it became one of the most dearly loved instruments for the worship of the Lord in ancient Israel.⁵³ People need time to dissociate the past associations of musical instruments and other artistic forms before they can be used in Christian worship.

⁵¹ Ian Collinge, "A Kaleidoscope of Doxology", 48.

⁵² Tom Avery and Paul Neely, "Flee from Flugelhorn? Implications about Instruments from Old Testament" in *Ethnodoxology*, Vol. 1, No. 4 (Texas, 2002), 5.

⁵³ Ronald B. Allen, "The Devil's instrument have a long History of Sacred Usage, in *Ethnodoxology*, Vol. 1, No. 4, first published in *worship leader* magazine in 1992.

Brahma Bandhav Upadhyaya, one of the Indian Christian theologians, talks about how this transition took place in Greek religion:

There is a clear parallel in the development of Greek culture. Originally it was closely linked with Greek religion. Gradually the bonds were loosened, philosophy became a separate discipline, mythology became part of literature rather than religion, and finally Greek religion died, while *cultural* Hellenism, philosophic, scientific, literary and artistic, merged with Christian tradition and still very much alive today.⁵⁴

People are reluctant to use certain artistic forms not because they are evil in themselves, but rather due to their association with evil practices. In India many of the musical instruments that did not make their way into the church are associated with certain gods or goddesses of Hinduism. Many of the Hindu god and goddess images have musical instruments associated with them. Ed Lapiz says this when he talks about Philippino music and dance forms:

When we say: "Dance and music are demonic," we seem to be saying that Satan created them, and therefore owns them. But Satan does not own anything; he is not a creator; he is a thief and a destroyer. . . Philippine music and dance are neither pagan nor evil, because they are nonliving things with no soul or heart. So what makes an art form sacred or evil? The heart of the artist, the musician, or the dancer and the object of worship. . . If a Christian dances to the Lord, to worship Him, then that dance is sacred.⁵⁵

"Biblical scholars agree that Psalm 29, sung with high reverence in the ancient Hebrew worship of Yahweh, is based on a pagan song used by the Canaanites whom Israel was called to drive out of their promised land."⁵⁶ But at the same time we cannot ignore certain associations with certain people groups. The association of certain music,

⁵⁴ Robin Boyd, *An Introduction to Indian Christian Theology*, (New Delhi: ISPCK, 2005) 69.

⁵⁵ Ed Lapiz, *Pagpapahiyang: Redeeming Culture and Indigenizing Christianity*, (Philippines: Self Published, 2010). 109 -110.

⁵⁶ Donald P. Hustad, *True Worship: Reclaiming Wonder & Majesty*, (Carol Stream, IL: Hope Publishing Company, 1998), 164.

dance form or certain other artistic expression may have very strong influences on certain people groups. It will be hard to shake off this associated meaning, at least in certain contexts. Just because a particular art form is a part of a particular culture does not mean that Christians can endorse it without judging it on the basis of biblical teachings.⁵⁷ Ian Collinge who had several years of experience in working with Tibetan Christian communities puts it like this:

The scriptures encourage us to use indigenous musical and artistic forms. Some cultural forms may be accepted without changes while others may need to be re-worked, being specially dedicated to Christ. A few art forms may need to be put aside until their current associations with other religions or immorality are no longer distracting.⁵⁸

Conclusion

The Bible in general is a book that contextualized its message to its primary audience. It is the responsibility of the church to make it relevant for the people of every time and place. From the very beginning to the end, the Bible points to God as a loving creator moving towards creation and making known his plans in the most understandable way possible. To make the world know what the Kingdom of God meant, He sent his son to live in a particular culture at the particular time to live out and teach kingdom principles to an earthly culture. Jesus stands as the best example for us to live the Kingdom of God within an earthly culture. He taught us how to live with a culture

⁵⁷ Leslie Newbegin, *The Open Secret: Sketches for a Missionary Theology*, (Grand Rapids MI: Wm. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1978), 161.

⁵⁸ Ian Collinge, 53.

following its customs and practices. but challenging the areas that are against kingdom principles.

There will be a progressive movement towards a “Christian culture” which will reflect both the universality of the gospel and the particularity of the human environment. The lifestyle of the Indian Christian church, for example, will have distinctive qualities similar to those of any other national Christian church. It will manifest the fruit of the Spirit. At the same time it will be a truly Indian church divested of the worldview, values and customs of Hinduism that are contrary to the gospel.⁵⁹

All that we need to know about how to make Christianity and its worship appropriate to its context is given to us through the teachings of the Bible. The Bible stands as the most effective guide for contextualization. So thinking of contextualization outside biblical teaching is itself against the teachings of the Bible. One of the major reasons for failure of contextualization of Christian worship is failure to ground the whole process in the teachings of the Bible. The Lausanne movement affirms this perspective:

Culture must always be tested and judged by Scripture. Because men and women are God's creatures, some of their culture is rich in beauty and goodness. Because they are fallen, all of it is tainted with sin and some of it is demonic. The gospel does not presuppose the superiority of any culture to another, but evaluates all cultures according to its own criteria of truth and righteousness, and insists on moral absolutes in every culture.⁶⁰

As Pedrito Maynard-Reid says, in worship there are unchangeable constants and also elements that can be appropriated according to contexts. The essential historical,

⁵⁹ Bruce J Nicholls, *Contextualization*, 13.

⁶⁰ Lausanne Covenant, available from <http://www.lausanne.org/en/documents/lausanne-covenant.html>; internet.

theological truths and practices take precedence over local cultures art forms.⁶¹ Other areas can be appropriated according to the local congregation. Ron Man, following a similar idea, gives the example of a suspension bridge. Just the like the pillars of the suspension bridge are unmovable, there are aspects in worship that are not changeable because they are foundational aspects of worship. But there are also areas that are flexible, which allows culturally appropriate expressions. Form, style, music and other artistic expressions come under that category.⁶² Any attempt at contextualization that is not from the very center of Christian faith, i.e. the Bible, is merely peripheral. Pope Benedict XVI puts it like this: “An inculturation that is more or less just an alteration of outward forms is not inculturation at all, but a misunderstanding of inculturation. Moreover, it frequently insults cultural and religious communities, from whom liturgical forms are borrowed in an all too superficial and external way.”⁶³

Indigenization is not merely an outward thing. It is the design of the church from its very foundations. It is founded on the teachings of the mission of God and in the teachings of the Bible. It is how God wants his church to exist in diverse contexts in different times in history. Charles Kraft quotes Alan Tippett:

When indigenous people of a community think of Lord as their own, not as a foreign Christ, when they do things unto the Lord meeting the cultural needs around them, worshiping in patterns they understand; when their congregations function in

⁶¹ Maynard-Reid, *Diverse Worship* . 23.

⁶² Ron Man, “The Bridge: Worship Between Bible and Culture,” in *Worship and Missions for the Global Church: An Ethnodoxology Handbook*, ed. James Krabill (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 2013) 23.

⁶³ Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, trans. John saward (San Francisco: Ignatius press.2008), 201

participation in a body, which is structurally indigenous; then you have an indigenous Church.⁶⁴

⁶⁴ Charles H. Kraft, "The Development of Contextualization Theory" in *Appropriate Christianity*, ed. Charles F. Kraft (California: William Carey Publishing, 2005), 20.

CHAPTER THREE

HISTORICAL REVIEW

Introduction

Ethnomusicology is a growing field of interest in the present musicological, missiological and worship context. Although the term 'ethnomusicology' came into existence only in the mid 1950's, the concept of the discipline already existed under diverse names in different parts of the world. It arose out of the concern of musicologists and anthropologists for the people of different people groups who were denied the freedom to use their cultural musical expression by their art forms having been deemed to be primitive or under developed. K.C F Krause's book *Darstellung aus der Geschichte der Musik* written in 1827 is a classic example of the attitude of the Western world towards the music of others. "In Antiquity, which was the childhood of music (!), only simple, un-adorned melody was known, as is the case today with such peoples as Hindus, Chinese, Persians, and Arabs, who have not yet progressed beyond the childhood age (!) [*sic*]."¹ Several of the early travelogues often looked down upon and ridiculed the indigenous music of people groups around the world.

7. ¹ Curt Sach, *Wellsprings of Music*, (Netherlands: The Hague, Martinus Nijoff, 1962),

Interestingly Curt Sach, one of the significant personalities of early ethnomusicology wrote about the worship of the *Naga* people of North East India like this:

A bell rang, feebly and ‘tinnily,’ and the sound of singing rose in our ears. Were these Naga voices? It sounded like a hymn or chapel-chant – or perhaps not quite like either. This singing was entirely different from Naga music, the melodies were not in harmony with Naga expression – as discordant as the ugly tin-roofed chapel amidst the palm thatches of the village houses. People with sullen faces came out of the chapel; they seemed to me mere shadows of Nagas, or, even worse, caricatures of Europeans.²

Although Curt Sach was not particularly interested in the Christian use of music, he and many others wrote in protest of the general attitude towards the music of the non-Western world. Out of the concern of many musicologists, anthropologists and ethnologists the new discipline of ethnomusicology developed.

As the scope and methodology changed, the name and the definition of the field of ethnomusicology also changed over the past two centuries. Due to its large scope ethnomusicology is difficult to define in one particular way. Alan P. Merriam, one of the leading figures in the field of ethnomusicology and whose perspectives on the discipline led to a Christian perspective on the field, says this about its dual nature:

Ethnomusicology carries within itself the seeds of its own division, for it has always been compounded of two distinct paths, the musicological and the ethnological, and perhaps its major problem is the blending of the two in a unique fashion which emphasizes neither but takes into account both . . . This dual nature of the field is marked by its literature, for where one scholar writes technically upon the structure of music sound as a system in itself, another chooses to treat music as a functioning part of human culture and as an integral part of a wider whole.³

² Curt Sach, *Wellsprings of Music*, 4.

³ Alan P Merriam, *The Anthropology of Music*, (Evanston, IL: North-western University Press, 1964), 3.

Ethnomusicology always had two groups of ethnomusicologists who studied two different aspects of music. One group studied music merely as isolated sound and analyzed and studied it as sound. But the other group was greatly influenced by anthropology and studied music in its context by considering different aspects that are involved in composing and performing music. John Blacking, who conducted a significant study on music and human life, explains the close relationship between music and the sociocultural life of people like this:

Functional analyses of musical structure cannot be detached from the structural analyses of its social function: the function of tones in relation to each other cannot be explained adequately as a part of a closed system without reference to the structures of the sociocultural system of which the musical system is a part, and to the biological system to which all music makers belong.⁴

Although started as a purely musicological discipline, ethnomusicology is an area of great interest in Christian circles today because of its focus on sociocultural and anthropological aspects of music. Several mission agencies and worship leadership training schools are recognizing the benefits of ethnomusicological training in worship and missions. There are several Christian colleges offering courses on Christian ethnomusicology today. This chapter focuses on tracing the definitions and history of ethnomusicology and its Christian variant ethnodoxology. The discipline of ethnomusicology developed in different countries in different times through local research and it is not possible to develop a whole organized history of the field. The scope of the chapter is limited to definitions and introducing significant contributors of

⁴ John Blacking, *How Musical is man*, (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1974), 30.

the discipline who led to development of the Christian use of ethnomusicology known as ethnodoxology.

Early History – Before Jaap Kunst

Although the term ethnomusicology was coined only in the latter part of the 1950's, the idea of the discipline existed long before. There were several scholars of ancient times who believed that the impact of music is greater than merely its sound. Timothy Rice in his Book *Ethnomusicology: a Short Introduction* list several contexts where the concept of ethnomusicology existed. Ancient Chinese and Greeks understood music as an extraordinarily important cultural expression with implication in many areas of life. Plato wrote in his book *The Republic* that music affected ethical behavior and therefore the political life of society. The Chinese philosopher Confucius believed that training in 'proper' music, the kind played in rituals, could cultivate good qualities, while entertainment music would have an opposite effect. St. Augustine believed that musical performance was a way for humankind to reach beyond the mundane to focus on divinity. The 16th century Jesuit missionaries studied the music of indigenous people to spread the Gospel in their region and convert them to Christianity.⁵

Jaap Kunst, one of the most significant figures in ethnomusicology, related the development of the discipline of ethnomusicology with the worldview of Romanticism.

⁵ Timothy Rice, *Ethnomusicology: A Short Introduction* (New York: Oxford University press, 2014), 12.

According to him, there was a tendency towards remote kinds of art during the Romantic period, and philosophers like Jean Jacques Rousseau heralded this. The Romantic worldview took interest in poetic and other artistic expressions of distant civilizations and found beauty in diversity, variety and irregularity.⁶ The early researchers in the field called it a study of “exotic Music” or “non-Western Music”.

In 1784, William Jones, the English High Court judge in Calcutta wrote a book titled *On the Musical Modes of Hindoos*. Although there are several examples of musical forms in South India given, it is not considered authentic as the author mentioned in his writings that he had ‘regularized’ the music. But his writing did show the interest given to the music of Calcutta, one of the leading music centers of the country of India.⁷ There were several other musicologists who attempted to introduce the music of the non-Western world to the Western audience and prove that these musical systems are scientific and worthy of careful study.

In the 18th and 19th centuries there was a rise in nationalism throughout Europe. Many classical composers like Bela Bartok, Zoltan Kodaly and Ralph Vaughan Williams used indigenous melodies in their compositions to promote nationalism.⁸ Bela Bartok used Edison’s phonograph in Hungary, Romania and Transylvania and notated several Hungarian songs in 1904. Several national composers in Europe turned to peasant songs

⁶ Curt Sach, *Wellsprings of Music*, 9.

⁷ Curt Sach, *Wellsprings of Music*, 10.

⁸ Timothy Rice, *Ethnomusicology*, 14.

to enrich classical music by using those melodies to make piano and orchestral compositions.⁹

In America the collection of traditional music was linked to ethnological studies of Native Americans. The work of comparative musicologists and the work of ethnomusicologists were greatly aided by the invention of the phonograph in 1877 by Thomas Edison. He was able to transform the human voice into curves engraved on wax cylinders and later reproduce that voice through the phonograph. His invention was used by several researchers in the field in recording music of different people groups around the globe. It helped the ethnomusicologists with transcription and analysis of music. Many ethnomusicologists made large collections of recordings from different parts of the world and preserved them for following generations to use for studies.

The ethnologist Jesse Walker Fewkes was the first to use Edison's wax cylinder machine in the field during his research with the Passamaquoddy Indians of northeastern USA and later with Zuni and Hopi Pueblos of Arizona.¹⁰ Alice Cunningham Fletcher started field work among the Lakota in 1881 and published more than forty monographs. Frances Densmore published several books and made recordings on wax cylinders for the Bureau of American Ethnology.¹¹ Another decisive turn in this area of

⁹ Helen Myers (ed.), *Ethnomusicology: An Introduction*, (New York: W.W Norton & Company, 1992), 4-5.

¹⁰ Helen Myers, *Ethnomusicology: An Introduction*, 6.

¹¹ Timothy Rice, *Ethnomusicology*, 14.

study was in 1882 when Theodore Baker's doctoral thesis on the music of North American Indians made the lore of primitive music an academic subject.¹²

In 1884 Alexander Ellis published his epoch-making method in his *Tonometrical Observations on some existing non-Harmonic scales*, in the *Proceedings of The Royal Society*. As he had no musical ear he took refuge in mathematics and devised a computing system of *cents* or hundredths of an equal tempered semitone.¹³ His invention provided several ethnomusicologists with a systematic tool for analyzing music of the non-Western World. In 1885 Austrian scholar Guido Adler published his new field of study called *Musikwissenschaft*, musical science or musicology. He divided the musicology into two parts, historical and systematic. Historical musicology was primarily concerned about the history of European music. The systematic branch was divided into several subfields like music theory, aesthetics and comparative musicology. He gave modern ethnomusicology the name *Musikologie* and acknowledged it as a new and "very meritorious sideline."¹⁴ Since the publication of Adler's work this newly emerged discipline was known as "comparative musicology" until that title was criticized in the 1950's. In 1886 Carl Stumpf, a psychologist and philosopher, wrote one of the first musical ethnographies on the Bella Coola Indians of British Columbia.¹⁵ He, with the help of his student Erich M. von Hornbostel, founded the Berlin Phonogramm-Archiv in

¹² Curt Sach, *Wellsprings of Music*, 11.

¹³ Curt Sach, *Wellsprings of Music*, 11

¹⁴ Curt Sach, *Wellsprings of Music*, 11.

¹⁵ Timothy Rice, *Ethnomusicology*, 16.

1901.¹⁶ The comparative musicologist primarily focused on five areas of study – the origin of music, music evolution, understanding of musical distribution of musical styles and artifacts around the world, musical style analysis and comparison, and classification and measurement of musical phenomena such as pitch, scales and musical instruments.¹⁷ Comparative Musicologists used different schemes to talk about and compare different music traditions. One of the most popular schemes used even today is known as the Sachs-Hornbostel system. It was designed by Curt Sachs and Eric von Hornbostel. In their system they divided musical instruments into four groups according to the primary vibrating material: Air (Aerophone), Strings (Chordophone), Skin (Membrane) and Solids (Idiophones). These groups are subdivided into sub-groups to be more specific about the analysis. Eric von Hornbostel's student George Herzog took the discipline to further heights with consistent methodology and practice and influenced later ethnomusicologists in Europe and in America.¹⁸

From the time of Guido Adler the field of study was known as comparative musicology. By 1950 the field of comparative musicology lost its relevance as many scholars recognized that all knowledge in its very nature is comparative. Comparison of

¹⁶ Gregory Barz and Timothy J. Colley, *Shadows in the Field: New Perspectives for Fieldwork in Ethnomusicology (Second Edition)*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008) Loc. 458.

¹⁷ Timothy Rice, *Ethnomusicology*, 17.

¹⁸ Robert Kendrick, "Issues, Ideas, and Personalities in the History of Ethnomusicology" in *The Journal of Musicology* Vol. 7, No.2, (Spring 1989), 270.

knowledge is not a unique feature of comparative musicology alone. Comparison is simply a method of study and it cannot be a separate discipline.

Later History – After Jaap Kunst

In the 1950's the term comparative musicology ceased to be popular and the separate identity of the discipline also was questioned seriously by many anthropologists and musicologists. Knowing the scope of the field of study and its significance, Jaap Kunst, the Dutch musicologist coined the term "ethno-musicology" in his book *Musicologia: A study of the Nature of Ethnomusicology, Its problems, Methods, and Representative Personalities* to replace the older term comparative musicology. Bruno Nettl, one of the leading contemporary ethnomusicologists thinks that "the changes in name paralleled changes in intellectual orientation and emphasis."¹⁹ Jaap Kunst prefixed the word 'Ethno' before musicology with a hyphen in between to describe the new discipline.²⁰ He combined the names of two older musicology disciplines – study of music – and ethnology – a comparative study of human linguistic and cultural diversity based on direct contact with, and ethnographic accounts of, particular groups of people. According to Jaap Kunst:

¹⁹ Bruno Nettl, *The Study of Ethnomusicology: Thirty-one Issues and Concepts*, (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2005), 3.

²⁰ S.A.K Durga, *Ethnomusicology: A Study of Intercultural Musicology*, Delhi: BR. Rhythms. 2004), 2.

The study-object of ethno-musicology or as it was originally called, comparative musicology, is the traditional music and musical instruments of all cultural strata of mankind, from the so-called primitive peoples to the civilized nations. Our science, therefore, investigates all tribal and folk music and every kind of non-European art music ... European art- and popular (entertainment-) music do not belong to its field.²¹

Compared to the later development of the field of ethnomusicology Kunst's definition was very limited in scope. It is also not so popular a definition as it keeps the West at the center and marginalizes the rest of the world as something inferior. But this new title for the discipline was accepted well in the United States. This combination of anthropological and musicological study captured the attention of four American anthropologists and musicologists: Charles Seeger, Willard Rhodes, David McAllister and Alan P. Merriam. They together started an ethnomusicology newsletter in 1953, the Society of Ethnomusicology in the following year, and the *Journal of Ethnomusicology* in 1958.²² In 1956 the American Society of Ethnomusicology, during the International Congress of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences in Philadelphia, decided to eliminate the hyphen between ethno and musicology and made it into one word "ethnomusicology".²³ Jaap Kunst gave much importance to the fieldwork aspect of ethnomusicology. He emphasized the significance of doing the fieldwork while the researcher lived among the people group for a long time rather than merely being a tourist among them. Bringing the natives to academic labs would take them away from their social context and isolate music from society. Jaap Kunst made special references to

²¹ Timothy Rice, *Ethnomusicology*, 3.

²² Timothy Rice, *Ethnomusicology*, 20.

²³ Curt Sach, *Wellsprings of Music*, 15.

countries like India where music is closely connected to life events, particular times in the day, and seasons.²⁴

Bruno Nettl, one of the leading contemporary ethnomusicologists in his *North American Indian Musical Styles*, analyzed structural similarities and differences between the music of the neighboring tribes in order to create a classification of regional musical style. Mantle Hood published a comparative tool called a 'Hardness Scale' to compare between maximum and minimum range of musical features like loudness, pitch, timbre and density.²⁵ He defined ethnomusicology as "the science that deals with the music of the peoples outside the Western world." The problem with this definition is that it still gives the picture that the west is the center of Music that studies the music of others. It also gives the impression that the object of study is the same as musicology and ethnology. It thinks of music as an object rather than a process. He also talked about the strategy of ethnomusicologists, which makes this discipline very significant for Christian missions.

The tendency of Ethnomusicologists has been to work intensively rather than extensively in the field. This means that one concentrates on working with a smaller number of informants or teachers, does not usually survey a large population, but instead emphasizes study in depth of small numbers of people.²⁶

The attention of ethnomusicological study on small people groups or smaller divisions within a people group has attracted many Christian organizations into this field

²⁴ Curt Sach, *Wellsprings of Music*, 15.

²⁵ Timothy Rice, *Ethnomusicology*, 21.

²⁶ Bruno Nettl, "Ethnomusicology: Definition, Direction and Problems," in *Music of Many Cultures*, ed. Elizabeth May (CA: University of California Press, 1983), 3.

of study. Like the Great Commission passages in the Scripture, this discipline also focuses on every people group. Rather than analyzing them under the large umbrella of a region like North India or South India, it focuses on the smallest divisions among the people groups and spends time to study them.

Mantle Hood took his definition from that proposed by the American Musicological Society but inserted the prefix “ethno.” “[Ethno] musicology is a field of knowledge, having as its object the investigation of the art of music as physical, psychological, aesthetic, and cultural phenomenon. The [ethno] musicologist is a research scholar, and he aims primarily at knowledge about music.”²⁷

Charles Seeger, one of the early leading figures in the field of ethnomusicology, understood the close connection between music and the social process and the context that creates music. He says this:

Music is a product of man and has structure, but its structure cannot have an existence of its own divorced from the behavior which produced it. In order to understand why a music structure exists as it does, we must also understand how and why the behavior which produces it is as it is, and how and why the concepts which underlie that behavior are ordered in such a way as to produce the particularly desired form of organized sound.²⁸

In the 1960’s Alan P. Merriam, defined the field of study as, “The study of music in culture” and explained the definition further by adding “the study of music as a universal aspect of man’s activities.”²⁹ In 1973 he redefined his definition as “study of

²⁷ Alan P. Merriam, *The Anthropology of Music*, 6.

²⁸ Alan P. Merriam, *The Anthropology of Music*, 7.

²⁹ Timothy Rice, *Ethnomusicology*, 3.

Music as Culture” and in 1975 by adding greater emphasis on culture redefined it as “music is culture and what musicians do is society.”³⁰ Throughout his career Merriam was dissatisfied with the absence of a unified identity, purpose, and methodology. Later in his career he appreciated the diversity in definitions and accepted it as a sign of growth in the field of study.³¹ According to him ethnomusicology is made up both of the musicological and the ethnological, and that music sound is the result of human behavioral processes that are shaped by the values, attitudes, and beliefs of the people who comprise a particular culture. He explained three stages in the work of an ethnomusicologist.

1. Collection of Data. In the case of ethnomusicology that means to work in the field.
2. Analysis of data Collected. Two kinds of analysis are involved in it. First is the organization of ethnographic and ethnologic material into coherent information about the musical practices, behavior and concepts; and second is the analysis of sound data in a lab.
3. The result of the analysis is applied to relevant problems in the society.³²

³⁰ Helen Myers, *Ethnomusicology: An Introduction*, 8.

³¹ Bruno Nettl, *Nettl's Elephant: On the History of Ethnomusicology*, (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2010), Loc. 292.

³² Alan P. Merriam, *The Anthropology of Music*, 6-8.

Merriam's detailed description on the purpose of ethnomusicological studies can be seen as foundational to the Christian use of ethnomusicology. He narrates four purposes for the study of ethnomusicology.

1. Ethnomusicology has a protective role for the music of other people of the world which is abused and maligned, but is worthy to be studied.
2. A second purpose is to preserve the folk music of the local people that are disappearing. Ethnomusicology purposes to study and preserve them while they are still in existence.
3. Music is a means of communication. Music is one of the most effective means of communication but not used effectively to its potentials. Music can be an effective tool when it is used within a local community, who understand its symbolic meanings. There are several non-verbal aspects involved in music that are understood well only by the community where the musical process took place. Without considering the non-verbal aspects of music it cannot be used as an effective communication tool.
4. To use the primitive music to enhance Western Music. This is not a well-accepted purpose of ethnomusicology.³³

³³ Alan P. Merriam, *The Anthropology of Music*, 10 – 13

Merriam's emphasis on living in the field for a prolonged period of time and acquiring an insider view on the musical process of the people group has influenced Christian ethnomusicology in the following years.

Another significant contributor to a similar anthropological emphasis on musical process was John Blacking. He said:

There is so much music in the world that it is reasonable to suppose that music, like a language and possibly religion, is a species-specific trait of man. Essential psychological and cognitive processes that generate musical composition and performance may even be genetically inherited, and therefore present in almost every human being. An understanding of these and other processes involved in the production of music may provide us evidence that men are more remarkable and capable creatures than most societies ever allow them to be.³⁴

After studying many people groups in Africa he understood that music is not merely human organized sound. It is a process in which the whole community, their history and other social practices are closely connected. Music cannot be studied detaching it from the people group to which it belongs. In many contexts musical things are not merely musical, and sound can be secondary to other extra-musical things that it represents.

According to Gilbert Chase "the present emphasis [of ethnomusicology] . . . is on musical study of contemporary man, to whatever society he may belong, whether primitive or complex, Eastern or Western."³⁵ According to him the difference between musicology and ethnomusicology is that musicology deals with the past domain and

³⁴ John Blacking, *How Musical is Man*, 7.

³⁵ Alan P. Merriam, *The Anthropology of Music*, 6

ethnomusicology deals with the present. Structural analysis of music cannot be separated from a functional analysis of the society.

In the 1960's American ethnomusicologists were divided into two camps. First was the group of ethnomusicologists with anthropological training under the leadership of Alan P. Merriam. The other group was comprised of people with musicological training under the leadership of Mantle Hood. Many later ethnomusicologists criticized musical analysis merely based on scales and intervals. Many ethnomusicologists shifted from analyzing a piece of music to the process of music creation and performance.³⁶ The writings of Alan P. Merriam, John Blacking and African ethnomusicologist K.H Kwabena gave ethnomusicology the foundational principle that musical performance is primarily social rather than merely musical.

George List in his book *Ethnomusicology: A Discipline Defined* says this:

That field of study known as ethnomusicology has expanded so rapidly that it now encompasses almost any type of human activity that conceivably can be related in some manner to what may be termed music. The data and methods used are derived from many disciplines found in the arts, the humanities, the social sciences, and physical sciences. The variety of philosophies, approaches, and methods utilized are enormous. It is impossible to encompass them all within one definition. In my opinion, Ethnomusicology cannot be adequately defined as an interdisciplinary activity. It is too diffuse, too amorphous.³⁷

George List here attempts to describe the vastness and scope of the field as it can include anything that can be related in any way to music. Among many people

³⁶ Helen P. Myers, *Ethnomusicology: An Introduction*, 8.

³⁷ George List, "Ethnomusicology: A Discipline Defined" in *Journal of Society of Ethnomusicology* Vol. xxiii, No.1, January 1979. 1.

groups there is no vocabulary for merely singing, but on many occasions their words mean to sing and dance, or singing with dance and drama. Ethnomusicological studies bring all these aspects related in any way to music under the scope of its study.

Christopher Small in his book titled *Musicking: The Meaning of Performing and Listening* gave a revolutionary concept about music. He argued that music is not an object that can be called a “thing.” He says “Music is not a thing at all but an activity, something that people do. The apparent thing “music” is a figment, an abstraction of the action, whose reality vanishes as soon as we examine it closely.”³⁸ He brought the concept of thinking of music as an activity, and that has impacted the Christian use of Ethnomusicology greatly. He defined Ethnomusicology like this:

To Music is to take part, in any capacity, in a musical performance, whether by performing, by listening, by rehearsing or practicing, by providing material for performance (what is called composing), or by dancing. We might at times even extend its meaning to what a person is doing who takes the tickets at the door or hefty men who shift the piano and drums or the roadies who set up the instruments and carry out the sound checks or the cleaners who clean up after everyone has gone. They, too, are all contributing to the nature of events that is a musical performance.³⁹

While this definition may seem to be an exaggeration about the scope of the field of ethnomusicology, it nails the point clearly that the field of study incorporates every aspect related to music making or performance in some degree. Here the definition is focused more on a formal setting of performance. But among certain people groups musical composition and performance are closely connected to many other aspects of

³⁸ Christopher Small, *Musicking: The Meaning of Performing and Listening* (Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 1998), 2.

³⁹ Christopher Small, *Musicking: The Meaning of Performing and Listening*, 8.

social and cultural life. All those activities come under the scope of ethnomusicology.

Jeff Todd Titon wrote about ethnomusicology in the same line in his famous book *World Music: An Introduction to the Music of the World's People* like this:

I like to define ethnomusicology as the *study of people making music*. People “make” music in two ways: They make or construct the ideas of music – what it is (and is not) and what it does – and they make or produce the *sounds* that they call music. Although we experience music as something “out there” in the world, our response to music depends on the ideas that we associate with that music, and those ideas come from people (ourselves included) who carry our culture.⁴⁰

The most recent ethnomusicologists recognize that music is an activity rather than a thing and it cannot be separated from the culture to which it belongs. Music is not isolated from culture and it cannot be studied meaningfully outside its context.

Ethnomusicology also gives much attention to emerging groups rather than merely studying the primitive music or uncontaminated world music. There are several ethnomusicologists today who are focusing on modern urban musical trends and activities. This enlarged scope of the discipline led to the development of Christian use of ethnomusicology.

Christian Ethnomusicology/ Ethnodoxology

Christian interest in the field of Ethnomusicology originated from the anthropological focus of ethnomusicology. Many ethnomusicologists like Jaap Kunst, Alan P. Merriam and Christopher Small wrote extensively on the significance of music as

⁴⁰ Jeff Todd Titon, *World Music: An Introduction to the Music of the World's People*, (USA: Schirmer – Thomas Learning Company, 2005), xvi.

a tool to understand culture, and many of them thought of music as the most powerful expression of culture. They also recognized that 'to music' or the activity of music involves many other aspects of culture rather than merely listening or making sound. Many of them also recognized music as a very effective tool of communication especially in the mission fields outside the Western world. Christian interest in ethnomusicology primarily originated as a tool for missions and today it is also a matter of interest in the area of worship as well. Many are recognizing the fallacy of using ethnomusicology as a tool for missions while the church's worship remains very Westernized. Today several Christian ethnomusicologists focus on ethnomusicology methods to make worship more culturally appropriate or indigenous.

The term ethnomusicology refers primarily to an academic discipline that deals with music and related activities. Although missionaries used ethnomusicology methods to study culture and use those findings to communicate the Gospel, it remained a part of the discipline of ethnomusicology.

Many Christian and secular ethnomusicologists consider the marimba virtuoso Vida Chenoweth as the founder of ethnomusicological methods for Christian mission and worship. She composed several songs in the style of local people while she was doing fieldwork in ethnomusicology in Papua New Guinea. Chenoweth developed a means to analyze the music of the local people and used that analysis to compose new songs in the indigenous style of the people among whom she was working. To that point missionaries had recognized the need of learning language to communicate, but Chenoweth showed that musical communication is also comparable with communication through language

and can be very effective.⁴¹ In her article “Spare them from Western Music” she made this classical statement regarding missions; “There is nothing in the New Testament to suggest that the evangelized need adopt the cultural ways of the evangelist.”⁴² She compared musical communication with communication through language and how cultural and structural understanding of music is significant in effective communication through music. According to her, even though foreign music may be enjoyable to people who are listening, it cannot carry the fully intended message or communicate the associated emotions. She wrote this regarding the need of trained Ethnomusicologists in the mission context:

The focus of Ethnomusicology is the description of the musical practices of a particular people. Its aim is the analysis of not only the formal aspects of the musical structure but of the role of music within the cultural framework of a society. The analysis of musical systems, particularly those within an oral tradition, is not a task for laymen. It requires a specialist, one trained in both music theory and practice and in anthropology.⁴³

As an experienced musician, musicologist, ethnomusicologist and missionary Vida Chenoweth understood the need for trained ethnomusicologists in the mission field, as it is not a task that can be handled by someone who is not trained in the field. She called this process Ethno-hymnology. She argued that just like Western hymns that people of the West cherish belong to their faith through their culture, so other people

⁴¹ John Bellarmine Vallier, “Ethnomusicology as a Tool for Christian Missionary,” in *Journal of Romanian Society of Ethnomusicology* Vol. 10, (2003). 87.

⁴² Vida Chenoweth, “Spare them from Western Music” in *Worship and Mission for the Global Church: An Ethnodoxology handbook*, ed. by James R. Krabill (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 2013), 120.

⁴³ Vida Chenoweth and Darlene Bee, “On Ethnic Music” in *Practical Anthropology* Vol. 15, No. 5 (September – October 1968), 205.

groups around the world need to have that freedom to express their faith through their cultural expressions.⁴⁴ Several contemporary Christian ethnomusicologists are trained by Vida Chenoweth and are making significant contributions to the field of study.

The three important historic moments of the church that led to the encouragement of using local arts in worship and mission were Roman Catholics at Vatican II council in the 1960's, Protestants in the World Council of Churches (1970's) and Evangelicals around the time of the Lausanne Congress of World Evangelization in 1974. The Lausanne Congress stated that "the church must be allowed to indigenize itself, and to 'celebrate, sing and dance' the gospel in its own cultural medium."⁴⁵

Another early significant contributor to the field of Christian ethnomusicology was Thomas L. Avery also known as Tom Avery. He spent a major part of his life working among people groups in Brazil and other parts of the world and served as International Coordinator of Ethnomusicology for Wycliffe International. He promoted a concept called 'heart music' to describe culturally appropriate music for worship in the church. He explained his concept of 'heart music' like this:

What is Heart music, and why use it? The heart music of the people is usually the traditional music of that group. It is the music which they have heard and participated in as children and young people. We are told that music is even experienced prenatally. A musical style associated with the warmth and safety of a mother's

⁴⁴ Vida Chenoweth and Darlene Bee, "On Ethnic Music." 209.

⁴⁵ Ian Collinge, "A Kaleidoscope of Doxology: Exploring Ethnodoxology and Theology", *Doon Theological Journal*, Vol. 8, No.1, March (2011),42.

womb must have profound emotional associations with that most secure period of a person's life.⁴⁶

In line with the argument of Vida Chenoweth he also agreed to the point that people of other cultures may enjoy the music of others, especially of the West. But although it may be pleasing to the ears it will remain foreign. He was an exponent of local people themselves making music for their worship.

In 1997 David Hall coined the new term "ethnodoxology" for the Christian use of ethnomusicology and widened it by bringing all arts under its scope. David Hall defined his newly coined term ethnodoxology like this: "Ethnodoxology is the theological and anthropological study, and practical application, of how every people group might use their culture's unique and diverse artistic expressions appropriately to worship the God of the bible."⁴⁷

There were several reasons for the emergence of the new terminology for Christian use of ethnomusicology as ethnodoxology.

1. According to David Hall, the term ethnomusicology did not carry any Christian connotation and there was a need for a term that specifically addresses Christian use of indigenous music.⁴⁸

⁴⁶ Tom Avery, "Music of the Heart: The Power of Indigenous Worship in Reaching Unreached Peoples with the Gospel [online] accessed on June 2015 at <http://www.missionfrontiers.org/issue/article/music-of-the-heart>. Internet.

⁴⁷ David Hall, "The Centrality of Worship." In *Mission Frontiers* 23, NO.2 (Pasadena, CA: US Center for Missions, June 2001), 29.

⁴⁸ David Hall, "Ethnodoxology: Its role in Seeing a Worshipping Church Among Every People," (2001).

2. According to Ian Collinge the term ethnodoxology came about because there was a need to differentiate it from the academic discipline of ethnomusicology. Although it involves a significant amount of research it is purely practical in its approach and is answerable to the church at large rather than to the academic community of ethnomusicologists.⁴⁹
3. The scope of ethnomusicology is limited to music and related activities whereas the term ethnodoxology encompasses all aspects related to Christian worship in culture like music, drama, dance, mime, visual media or any other art.⁵⁰

In his article “Every team Needs One” in *Mission Frontiers* David Hall also talks about the significance of having a worship-art leader in every missionary context. He points to the significance of focusing on worship and thinking of missions as an outcome of worship. According to him the goal of missions is to bring more worshipers to the presence of God. He points to the present scenario in which church planters are not trained in worship leadership and the great need of having an indigenous worship leader in every team.⁵¹ David Hall’s coining of the word and his writings have inspired many Christian ethnomusicologists and eventually led to the founding of the International Council of Ethnodoxologists, also known as ICE. Although all the Christian

⁴⁹ Ian Collinge, “A Kaleidoscope of Doxology”, 37.

⁵⁰ David Hall, “Ethnodoxology: Its role in Seeing a Worshipping Church Among Every People,” (2001).

⁵¹ Dave Hall, “Every team Needs One: The Essential Role of the Worship-art Leader in Church-planting” in *Mission Frontiers* (June 2001), 23 – 24.

ethnomusicology workers do not use the term ethnodoxology to describe their work, this term has become significantly important in the area of worship and missions.

Although not a directly ethnodoxology work, Paul G. Hiebert's book titled *Anthropological Insight for Missionaries* has influenced many ethnomusicologists. As a book on anthropology in the missionary context, Hiebert discuss many ethnomusicological methods. He describes five uses of anthropological analysis in the mission contexts.⁵² Ethnodoxology relies much on anthropology for its fieldwork and analysis. Paul Hiebert's writings are considered as very effective by many ethnodoxologists and his writings are used greatly in ethnodoxological training.

Another significant contributor to the field of Christian ethnomusicology is Roberta King of Fuller Theological Seminary. During her teaching career at Daystar University in Nairobi she was involved in ethnomusicology fieldwork in Africa. She describes the need and role of ethnomusicology like this:

When missionaries encounter musical sounds and music events . . . they often do not know how to assess and interpret the proceedings. Historically, the church in mission has regularly branded such events as heathen and worldly, something to be avoided . . . It is unfortunate, however, that rather than seeking to understand the music and related dynamics of cultural events, the church has simply condemned them. New believers were asked to withdraw from their social group, often from their own families, and not allowed to participate . . . Ethnomusicology speaks to the need to interpret such occasions. Drawing from its anthropological roots, ethnomusicology specializes in studying music in relation to the life events of the people. It offers

⁵² Paul G. Hiebert, *Anthropological Insight for Missionaries*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic. 1985), 15.

insights to help people make sense of music and the significant roles it plays within societies.⁵³

Roberta King recognizes music is one of the most powerful and pervasive mediums of communication in missionary contexts. It is the culture that determines what music is and how it communicates within that culture. The meaning of the word music itself has different understanding in diverse cultures. For some it means instrumental music, for others it may mean vocal music, and for still others it may mean singing with instruments, dance and drama. Although her primary focus was on ethnomusicology in a mission context, her writings and the training program at Fuller Theological Seminary has greatly impacted the field of Christian Ethnomusicology.

One of the major Christian ethnomusicological writings in the Indian worship context was the work of Chris Hale. He was a missionary kid who grew up in Nepal and studied in India. As a well-trained Hindustani musician he wrote his thesis under a pseudonymous name titled *Hindi Christian Bhajans: A Survey of their use by Christians and a Critique by Hindu Professionals in the Music world*. In his thesis he explored Hindu *Bhakti* tradition musical forms like *Bhajans*, *Kirtans*, *Namapuja* and *Mantra* and attempted to understand their use from Roman Catholic, Protestant and Hindu perspectives. He also provided critiques of Christian music from Hindu Professionals.⁵⁴ As a professional in Hindustani music and fluent in Hindi language he has composed

⁵³ Roberta R. King, "Towards a Discipline of Christian Ethnomusicology: A Missiological Paradigm," in *Missiology: An International Review* Vol. XXXII No.3 (July, 2004), 295.

⁵⁴ C.H Dicran, *Hindi Christian Bhajans: A Survey of Their Use By Christians and and a Critique by Hindu Professionals in the Music World*, (Unpublished, February 2000), 2.

many songs that are very commonly sung in indigenous worship services today. His website www.aradhnamusic.com provides his and other team member's songs for the use of the churches in India and Indian congregations abroad. In his famous article "Reclaiming Bhajans" in *Mission Frontiers* in 2001 Chris Hale wrote this:

Rahman popularized the use of Western instrumentation and rhythm in Indian songs. Indians, both young and old, love their own melodies and poetry. The time is ripe for Christian youth to begin composing worship songs to Christ which blend Indian melody and lyrical style with Western instrumentation. There are many composers of Indian music in the Church in India, but many of them feel that the younger generation is not interested in their music. What is needed is a freshness that will attract the young people to the Indian melodies, and that freshness is Western instrumentation and rhythm. There needs to be an exchange of musical ideas between the older and younger generations in the Christian church.⁵⁵

Chris Hale's musical styles worked well in North India, especially in urban contexts. It is very popularly used even today in many congregations. But their fusion music is not very appealing in Indian village worship contexts. Many new generation worship bands took these songs and made them as strange as any other Western songs. But his contribution to Indian church music is immense.

Mary Beth and Todd Saurman also contributed much in training in ethnomusicology. Both of them work in Thailand and have written several articles and led many training programs in ethnomusicology in different parts of the world, especially in India. They work primarily in the area of art and linguistics but they are also involved in many areas of ethnomusicology. Mary Beth Saurman says this:

⁵⁵ Chris Hale, "Reclaiming the Bhajan Ancient musical styles of India transform modern worship of Christ" *Mission Frontiers* [Jounal online] available from <http://www.missionfrontiers.org/issue/article/reclaiming-the-bhajan>. Internet.

Art forms, like language, are found in every culture. Ethnic art forms are fundamental elements of any cultural system, and reflect the heart concern and responses of a culture. They are communication tools. Oral traditions house their library of cultural and value-centered information, not in buildings or in books in shelves, but in songs, poems, dances, dramas, stories, visual arts, and other expressive mediums. These cultural traditions, when accessed appropriately, function as an effective bridge for an oral tradition's comfortable movement towards new innovations, which are entering their life context.⁵⁶

Another significant development in the field of ethnodoxology was the founding of the International Council of Ethnodoxologists (ICE) in 2003. According to their website, <http://www.worldofworship.org>, their vision statement is as follows:

The ICE network exists to encourage and equip Christ-followers in every culture to express their faith through their own heart music and other arts. We facilitate online networking and provide resources for the development of culturally appropriate Christian worship, utilizing insights from ethnomusicology, missiology, worship studies and the arts.⁵⁷

ICE has become one of the most significant networking organizations in connecting ethnodoxologists around the world. Many major training programs in ethnodoxology are conducted by ICE associates all around the world.

Frank Fortunato and Paul Neely are the other two significant contributors to the field of ethnodoxology. Frank Fortunato is the Operation Mobilization International Music Consultant and the Vice President of ICE. He is also the co-founder of Operation Mobilization's Heart Sound International (HSI). Paul Neely worked in Africa with SIL for many years leading music workshops with nearly 40 ethnic groups. He is a part of

⁵⁶ Mary Beth Saurman, "EthnoArts and Multilingual Education: Research Methods and Applied Techniques certificate Source" (Information sheet of Ethnoart training at Payap University, 2010).

⁵⁷ <http://www.worldofworship.org/vision.php>. Accessed on June 2015.

Artists in Christian Testimony, International Orality Network and Heart Sound

International.⁵⁸ Frank Fortunato and Paul Neely with Carol Brinneman published a book titled *All the World is Singing* in 2006, in a time when people were not much aware of ethnodoxology. This was a collection of examples of the power of indigenous music from the Global church context. This book was revolutionary and created an immense interest in the mind of missionaries and church leaders to use indigenous music in their local congregations. Frank Fortunato in the prelude of the book stated this:

In most places of the world, church planters no longer follow the nineteenth century practice of providing new converts western-imported hymn and chorus tunes with locally translated texts. Despite relentless urbanization, the desire to track and connect with one's ethnic roots, including indigenous melodies, rhythms, and instruments, has grown enormously. In recent decades, missions research has enabled the church to recognize this desire, which has naturally increased church and missionary interest in the culture, art, and music of the people groups they want to serve. Now the time has arrived to share these incredible stories.⁵⁹

Paul Neely and Frank Fortunato taught in different institutions and diverse seminars all around the world and have influenced many later ethnodoxologists. Frank Fortunato played a very significant role in producing the *Worship and Mission for the Global Church: An Ethnodoxology handbook* as well.

Ian Collinge, who is the founder of Resonance, a ministry dedicated to cross cultural and multicultural music and art training, has done some significant contribution to ethnodoxology in connecting it with theological studies. In his article "A Kaleidoscope

⁵⁸ James Krabill ed., *Worship and Mission for the Global Church: An Ethnodoxological Handbook* (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 2013) 555, 567

⁵⁹ Frank Fortunato, Paul Neely and Carol Brinneman, *All the World is Singing: Glorifying God Through the Worship Music of the Nations*, (GA: Authentic Publishing, 2006), xiii.

of Doxology: Exploring Ethnodoxology and Theology” he describes the goal of theology and ethnodoxology as being the same, and that is doxology or praise. His article points to the significance of ethnodoxological training in Bible Colleges and Seminaries and how the two disciplines are very closely connected in their ultimate purpose. He states the need of both theology and Ethnodoxology like this:

Redeeming indigenous art forms requires both a rigorous ethnodoxology and sympathetic theology. Ethnodoxology need to be rigorous not just sympathetic, because culture needs to be deeply understood, not patronized, eulogized, ignored or dismissed. It is culture insiders who know the connotations of their art forms . . . At the same time, theology needs to be sympathetic, not just rigorous, because communication, especially across social and cultural lines, first requires a recognition that theology itself is culturally shaped, and then a humility and eagerness to learn from culture members about how God’s truth might be expressed.⁶⁰

Robin Harris who is the president of ICE is another important contributor to the discipline of ethnodoxology. She says about ethnodoxology:

Twenty years ago the term didn’t exist, yet now it represents a significant paradigm shift in missions – affirming the engagement of all kinds of culturally appropriate biblically grounded artistic communication in the mission, worship, and spiritual formation of the church.⁶¹

Robin Harris has contributed much to the field of ethnodoxology in the past few decades. She served as ethnomusicologist in Siberia among *Sakha* people. Her writings and leadership have taken the field of ethnodoxology to a different height. The greatest contribution of ICE to the field of ethnodoxology is the production of the two-volume set published by the William Carey Library. Brian Schrag, the author of the

⁶⁰ Ian Collinge, “A Kaleidoscope of Doxology: Exploring Ethnodoxology and Theology”, 53.

⁶¹ Robin Harris, “A Case for Contextualized, Artistic, Communication in Mission, in *Mission Frontiers Vol. 36, No.5* (September – October, 2014), 4.

second volume of the book *Creating Local Arts Together: A Manual to Help Communities Reach their Kingdom Goals* is another significant personality in the contemporary leadership of ethnodoxology. The back cover of the book describes itself this way:

Creating Local Arts Together is a manual designed to guide an individual or group into a local community's efforts at integrating its arts with the values and purpose of God's Kingdom. The practical, playful text reduces experience-based scholarly insights gained from multiple decades of incarnational ministry around the world into a flexible seven-step process.⁶²

In the first chapter of the book Brian Schrag talks about the ethnodoxological approach to arts. In his method he attempts to approach every art graciously without being judgmental. He also understands that all the communities and their art forms are marred by sin and that God can redeem all things including artistic expressions. All the art forms are not equally appropriate for furthering God's purposes because of their associations with immorality and idolatry in the local community, and using them may lead the Christians back to their old lives. But only the local people can make a judgment on this matter with the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Ethnodoxological method does not force Kingdom change.⁶³ This is one of the most recent practical books published which talk about how to do ethnodoxology. This manual with the first volume of the set

⁶² Brian Schrag, *Creating Local Arts Together: A Manual to Help Communities Reach Their Kingdom Goals* (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 2013), Back Cover.

⁶³ Brian Schrag, *Creating Local Arts Together*, XVII.

Worship and Mission of the Global Church: An Ethnodoxology Source Book can be a great resource for training worship leaders for the purpose of contextualization of worship.

The US Center for Missions magazine known as *Mission Frontiers* has made two very significant contributions to ethnodoxology. The first was published in June 2001 titled “Worship that Moves the Soul.” It was one of the first attempts to recognize the significance of contextualized worship in different parts of the world. There were several entries from missionaries all around the world with dramatic stories and also an interview with Roberta King who introduced the discipline of ethnomusicology and ethnodoxology to the Christian world. The second significant volume of *Mission Frontiers* was published in September/ October 2014 titled “Ethnodoxology: Worship and Mission for the Global Church.” This issue was divided into seven sections – foundational, biblical, historical, cultural, holistic, methodological, and strategies and glimpses from the field. All the authors are members of the International Council of Ethnodoxologists. The releasing of such a volume after the publication of the 2001 volume shows the rising significance of the field of study today.⁶⁴

One of the major movements that led to the increasing interest in ethnodoxology and music in missions was an international gathering known as Global Consultation on Music and Missions (GCoMM) which originated in 2003. The first gathering took place at the South Western Baptist Theological Seminary Ft. Worth

⁶⁴ Robin Harris, “A Case for Contextualized, Artistic, Communication in Mission, 4.

campus with almost 300 delegates from different parts of the world. The second gathering of GCoMM was at Bethel University's St. Paul, Minnesota campus and was followed by another gathering in Singapore in 2010. The last GCoMM took place in Chang Mai in Thailand in July, 2015. These gatherings enable artists from different parts of the world to gain an understanding about what is going on with music and missions all around the world, and strategies and methods that are used by different indigenous worship practitioners. This also helps many artists from different parts of the world to network and share their materials and view points and provides training from experts on different aspects of worship and missions.

Conclusion

Christian ethnomusicology or ethnodoxology is a field of study with much significance for the contemporary life of the church. The church is rapidly growing in different parts of the world and developing worship styles that are appropriate to each worship group according to their culture is very significant, especially in light of the rising tendency to imitate the worship of the West. Many past attempts at indigenization of worship were not successful because they did not give much consideration to the diversity of culture and uniqueness of each of the people groups.

In the past ethnodoxology was an attempt by Western missionaries to contextualize the worship of the people groups that they were serving. But today it is changing and more local church leaders are taking initiative to make their own

communities' worship more culturally relevant. Much ethnodoxology training for people outside the Western world has made ethnodoxology a movement of nationals within their own countries.

Ethnodoxology focuses on the smallest subgroup within a people group and values their unique artistic expressions for the worship of God. Ethnomusicologists stay in the field and attempt to gain an insider view of the culture and encourage the members of the people group to develop their own biblically founded worship expressions using the artistic forms that they think are appropriate within their culture. Ethnodoxology makes worship a people's activity designed by the worshippers. Ethnodoxology is founded on the understanding that only the local church can contextualize their worship, that every small people group is God's design, and that each of them brings its unique worship to the throne of God. In other words ethnodoxology is an attempt to fulfill Revelation 7:9, the worship of every tribe and tongue before the throne and before the Lamb of God.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE PROJECT

Introduction

The first chapter of the thesis explained the need for contextualization of worship and how past attempts were not very successful outside the walls of seminaries and Christian Ashrams in India. The second chapter explored the biblical foundation for contextualization and ethnomusicology. The third chapter dealt with a historical survey of ethnomusicology and the Christian use of ethnomusicology known as ethnodoxology.

This chapter is an attempt to try the hypothesis that training worship leaders with the discipline of ethnomusicology is significant for the contextualization of worship in India. The goal of the project was to find out the impact of teaching a course in ethnomusicology to a group of worship leaders in training, and to see the change in their perspective toward indigenization of worship. The course was taught at Luther W. New Theological College in Dehradun, India in the department of worship and music. Duration of the course was one semester that started in the month of October 2014 and ended in the month of March 2015. There were two classes a week with additional sessions of worship experiments.

Need of a Project

A project like this was necessary to evaluate the hypothesis, because it is needful to attempt and evaluate before it is conducted on a regular basis in seminaries and Bible colleges. Many past attempts of indigenization in India were not tried out well before contextualized liturgies were introduced in local congregations. Local pastors and worship leaders were not trained to conduct indigenous worship services, and it resulted in failure of contextualization attempts in local contexts. Some other attempts for indigenous worship resulted in religious syncretism and created fear in the hearts of the local Christians to use any kind of local forms of worship. It resulted in reluctance of local Christian communities even to attempt any kind of indigenous arts in worship. To avoid such defensive attitudes among people it is important to try out this training on a group of people who represent the diverse cultures of India, and to evaluate the results. It would have been ideal to have an internship for the students to go to the field and actually try it in a church setting. But our geographic location and shorter duration of the worship and music program at Luther W. New Theological College restricted the conducting of such field training.

Plan for the Project

The plan of the project was to teach a semester long course in ethnomusicology to the Diploma in Worship and Music students at Luther W. New Theological College in Dehradun, India. The course was designed for the duration of a semester, lasting from the

end of October to March in order to provide more time for discussions, for attempting different worship styles from different parts of India, and to give opportunity for students to listen to some of the Indian artists and their indigenous worship music. The researcher attempted to understand the students' perspective on worship, culture and using of indigenous art forms both before and after the course to compare the difference using pre-course and post-course surveys.¹

Ethnomusicology – Course Design

This course was designed for a semester with two classes every week. The course included class lectures with audio and video material, and attending different worship services. The first class hour was used for a pre-course survey to gain understanding about their perspective on worship, music, culture and using of indigenous art forms in worship. The pre-course survey is included as appendix 1.

Pre-Course Survey Questions and Responses

The overall goal of the pre-course survey was to get some general understanding of the perspective on worship, places of gathering, architecture, musical forms and instruments and art forms that have association with other religions in the country. It also aimed at gaining general perspectives towards Western and Indian music

¹ Pre – course and post course surveys are included in the Appendix.

in different parts of the country. The survey also intended to shed light into the general denominational perspective – liturgical churches and non-liturgical churches – on using indigenous art forms in worship. There were also questions asked to gain understanding about architecture and also the method of physically handling scripture in comparison to other religions.² It also sought information regarding students' exposure to indigenous worship gatherings that already exist in India.

This survey was conducted without giving any idea to the students regarding the course that was going to be taught, to avoid any biases from students and avoid any answers to intentionally support the teacher's hypothesis.³ Fourteen different questions were included in the questionnaire, and the reasoning behind each of the questions and responses of the students are given below.

1. Students were asked about their particular worship tradition as the first question of the survey. The purpose of this question was to see if there are significant differences in liturgical and non-liturgical traditions towards indigenous worship and musical styles.

Three students in the class were from liturgical traditions and fourteen from the non-liturgical traditions.

² Christians are often accused by other religions in India for the way they handle the Bible. All the religions in India give reverence to their scriptures and handle with gestures of reverence. But Christian preachers often handle it just like any other book while they preach by folding and twisting it and at times even keeping it on the floor.

³ Pre-course survey was conducted on October 30th, 2014. Summary of the collected answers are given in the content.

2. The second question was regarding the musical instruments that can be used in worship. The reasoning behind the question was to gain their perspective about using indigenous musical instruments. The possible answers with a list of different Indian and Western instruments were given below the question with space to add more answers.

Three students stated that it is acceptable to use any musical instruments in worship. Fourteen students marked only Western instruments and two also marked the Indian drum called *Dolak*. None of the fourteen students incorporated instruments like *Sitar*, *Tambura*, *Veena*, *Sarangi* or Indian hand cymbals. Two of the students who agreed to use any instrument in worship also added two of their local instruments in worship. Both of those students who supported the usage of any instruments in worship were from liturgical traditions. This differed from my general understanding that liturgical traditions are against contextualization of worship.

3. The third question of the survey was regarding dances in worship. Two Western dances and six Indian dance forms were mentioned with space for more dance forms in the answers.

All seventeen of them marked only Western dance forms as appropriate for worship and no one mentioned any other dance forms as appropriate for worship.

4. The fourth question regarding the use of arts forms associated with other religions in Christian worship was included in the survey as an elaboration to the third question. The goal was to measure the significance of religious association of art forms.

Fifteen of the students refused the use of art forms that have other religious associations. Two of the students did not clearly understand the question and answered incorrectly. Using of musical and art forms associated with other religions were understood as not biblical by most of the students and three of them stated in the survey that it is not biblically acceptable.

5. The fifth question was targeted to understand if they have any biblical criteria for accepting or rejecting indigenous or Western music and other dance forms.

Many of the students seem to be confused about the answer as they could not effectively give any reasons to reject or accept particular musical or dance forms. One student wrote that ‘any dance form is good if it is acceptable to God.’ A few students specifically mentioned dance forms like *Bharathanatyam*, *Kuchupudi* and *Kathak* and said that they are not acceptable in Christian worship because the Bible does not say anything about those dance forms.

6. The sixth question was an attempt to understand the reasoning behind favoring or not favoring Western music.

Eleven students favored the use of Western music and using of Western musical instruments. Different reasons were given in support of using Western music – Western music is used all over the world for worship, it is good for glorifying God, younger generations like to worship with Western music, we are living in a modern Western world, it will attract more young non-Christians to church, in our or my church only Western music will work, and we worship the God of Westerners as well

and it is appropriate to use it. Six students said there should be some Indian songs also in worship and not just Western songs.

7. The seventh question was regarding art and musical, dance or art forms that exist locally and their appropriateness to be used in worship.

Half of the class did not know any local dance forms that can be used in worship from their context. Some of them did not recognize a few musical and dance forms as unique to their people group. One student commented that if local music and art forms are used in their congregation there will be no one left in the church for worship. Two students said that it should be used only for evangelism and not in Sunday worship time. A few in the class did not understand what was meant by 'local art forms.' I was under the impression that, as a majority in the class came from village backgrounds, they must be very familiar with local music and dance forms. But it was surprising to discover that many of them did not know much about their local art forms or never understood those art forms as unique to their culture.

8. The eighth question targeted the using of musical forms from other cultures in the worship of the church. The goal of the question was to see how students perceive the use of Western music and Indian pop music which is significantly influenced by Western musical and cultural practices in the local church's worship.

Except one student all of them said that music from other cultures is useful in worship. One student wrote against it stating that music from other cultures will not be understandable for people, and suggested to use the music from other cultures

only as special music. After reading the comments of most of the students it gives the impression that the question was not clearly understood by the students. I think this question needed to be a little more specific and clear.

9. The ninth question was regarding the posture of preaching. Preaching in Indian churches is always done in a standing posture and against that tradition the question was posed about preaching in a sitting posture. Most of the Indian religious traditions do their teaching in a sitting posture.

All the students favored a standing posture for preaching. Two students said it is acceptable to sit and preach in special situations where the preacher is not in good health, or in small gatherings like house meetings. Seven students also mentioned that it is against Christian tradition to sit and preach and it is equal to disrespecting the Word of God.

10. The tenth question was regarding the physical handling of the Bible. Most of the other religions in India handle their Scriptures with much reverence by keeping it on a stand while reading it and handling it with respect. But some Christian preachers, especially some from Free Church traditions, handle the Bible casually by imitating some preachers they see in the international Christian television channels. This is becoming a trend in the Indian Christian context and has been criticized by both Christians and non-Christians. There are Hindu people who think that the Bible is only a Christian book and not Scripture.

Six students did not answer the question. One student was of the opinion that it does not matter how it is handled. Ten students felt that it must be done with more visual reverence and must be handled with respect. It was surprising that six students did not respond to the question. Probably they should have been given more time to think about some issues like this rather than asking them to complete the questionnaire in a specific amount of time.

11. The eleventh question was about architecture. It was asked whether they prefer Indian style or Western style church buildings.

Sixteen students said that it does not matter, while one preferred the Western style. Conversations with the students after the survey revealed that many of them had never seen a church built using indigenous architecture. They were familiar with traditional church buildings with steeples, or Pentecostal or charismatic churches that do not have any particular architectural significance. It was difficult for many of them to imagine a church building with Indian architecture.

12. The twelfth question was regarding the students' denominational perspective regarding using indigenous music and dances.

Fifteen students said that their denomination will allow some Indian music and two of them said that they will not permit any Indian musical styles. Their descriptions pointed out that to them "Indian music" refers to Indian pop music but not to Indian devotional styles of music like *Bhajans*, *Kirtans* or other musical forms that are more commonly used in Indian religious traditions.

All of them stated that their denominations will never allow the use of any indigenous dances in worship although two of them said that they may allow it for evangelism.

13. The thirteenth question in the pre-course survey was regarding their experience of attending a Christian *Satsang*.⁴ It was meant to confirm the understanding that many Christians have never experienced an indigenous worship time.

Except for two students none of them ever attended a Christian *Satsang*. One of the students also mentioned that he would never want to attend one. Two students attended *Satsang* previously. Interestingly these two were the students who supported using any instruments in worship as the answer to the second question in the questionnaire.

14. The last question on the pre-course survey was regarding their perspective on New Theological College's worship. The College has chapel services every day and students and teachers attend Sunday worship also on campus. It is conducted mostly in a Western format with a few Hindi songs sung in Western style. Even Indian Christian *bhajans* are sung in Western style with Western instrumentation. Gestures of worship are mostly Western with lifting of hands, and worship leaders hold

⁴ *Satsang* is the gathering of devotees to worship a particular deity using indigenous devotional songs and instruments, sitting on the floor, singing several songs in a call and response format (*Bhajan*). Teaching will be done by a preacher sitting on a slightly elevated position. Many Indian religions use this format for worship.

microphones in their hands like any other Western worship leader. The reason to pose this question was to see how students perceive this worship atmosphere.

All of them said that they enjoy the worship of New theological College to some extent but are not fully happy about it. Many of them mentioned that there are too many instruments and they cannot hear the words. There was an overall dissatisfaction with the over loudness in singing.

A few of them mentioned that the College's worship is a combination of indigenous and Western styles. But in reality the worship is Western with a few indigenous songs sung in Western style. There seemed to be a lack of clarity among students about what is authentically indigenous. Question number thirteen also points to the fact that students have never experienced an Indian *Satsang* gathering and many of them seem to have a wrong understanding about what is an authentically indigenous devotional song.

Ethnomusicology Syllabus Explanation⁵

The ethnomusicology/doxology course that was taught was divided into ten different sections and the duration of the course was a semester. The course was taught in Hindi and in English. There were two fifty minute class sessions every week for lectures and other activities related to the course. Before the course was introduced students were

⁵ The syllabus used to teach the course in Ethnomusicology/ Ethnodoxology is included as Appendix – 3.

asked to do the pre-course survey to avoid any influences. The survey was printed in English and was translated and explained in Hindi in the class. Students used both Hindi and English to complete the survey. Course objectives were primarily focused on five aspects:

1. To develop a biblical understanding of diversity of culture and to develop a biblical foundation for the use of indigenous arts in worship.
2. To create awareness for the students regarding the use of ethnic art forms and communication media in Christian worship.
3. To prepare students for cross-cultural and multi-cultural ministry through diverse art forms, especially music.
4. To equip the students to analyze cultures and understand their core values and worldviews so that they are trained to approach cultures with sensitivity.
5. To develop interest in ethnic cultural media for communication of the gospel.

Every class session started with a worship devotion led by one of the students in the class. Students were instructed to do a worship devotion using a unique art form from their people group. They were allowed to use the help of other classmates if they needed more than one person to help them. Students were given five to seven minutes to do their unique indigenous artistic worship. They had to give a short description of the art form and the geographical location of their people group.

Section I – Christian Worship

This section of the syllabus was aimed to give students a good biblical theology of worship. As most of the students who join the school of music in New Theological College never had theological training, it is important to give them a good biblical understanding of worship. Two definitions of worship were taught to them in this part of the course. The first definition was by Daniel I. Block from his book *For the Glory of God: Recovering a Biblical Theology of Worship*. According to Daniel Block, “True Worship involves reverential human acts of submission and homage before the divine Sovereign in response to his gracious revelation of himself and in accord with his will.”⁶ This definition and its commentary were used because it is simple and small to remember, deals with several practically significant aspects of worship, and is well founded on scripture in most of its description.

The second definition was by D. A Carson from his book *Worship by the Book*:

Worship is the proper response of all moral, sentient beings to God, ascribing all honor and worth to their Creator-God precisely because he is worthy, delightfully so. This side of the Fall, human worship of God properly responds to the redemptive provisions that God has graciously made. While all true worship is God-centered, Christian worship is no less Christ-centered. Empowered by the Spirit and in line with the stipulations of the new covenant, it manifests itself in all our living, finding its impulse in the gospel, which restores our relationship with our Redeemer-God and therefore also with our fellow image-bearers, our co-worshipers. Such worship therefore manifests itself both in adoration and in action, both in the individual believer and in corporate worship, which is worship offered up in the context of the

⁶ Daniel I. Block, *For the Glory of God: Recovering A Biblical Theology of Worship*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2014), loc. 728.

body of believers, who strive to align all the forms of their devout ascription of all worth to God with the panoply of new covenant mandates and examples that bring to fulfillment the glories of antecedent revelation and anticipate the consummation.⁷

This definition was used because it is very detailed in nature and covers several major aspects of worship. This definition gives a chance to cover several major aspects of Christian worship that are foundational for the discussion of indigenization of Christian worship and the use of ethnomusicology as a tool.

A second part of the first section was a lecture on the contextualization of Christian worship. The goal of this section was to introduce the students to the concept of contextualization of worship, history, success and failures and future possibilities. Many students come from worship backgrounds where Western worship and musical styles are used and this section attempted to introduced them to the topic of indigenization of worship and ignite the process of brainstorming.

Section II – Culture

The second section of the syllabus focused on introducing the concept of culture. This section was divided into three parts. In the first part the focus was on defining culture. Materials for the lectures were from different resources that deal with culture from both a Christian perspective and a secular perspective. The first definition for culture was taken from Serena Nanda and Richard L. Warns' book *Culture Counts: A concise Introduction to Cultural Anthropology*. According to them "Culture is the way

⁷ D. A Carson (ed.), *Worship by the Book*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2002), 26.

members of a society adapt to their environment and give meaning to their lives.”⁸ The second definition was taken from Paul G. Hiebert’s book *Anthropological insights for missionaries*. He defines culture as “the more or less integrated systems of ideas, feelings, and values and their associated patterns of behavior and products shared by a group of people who organize and regulate what they think, feel and do.”⁹ Both these definitions and their explanations are used because they understand the Indian context, and especially Paul Hiebert uses several examples from India to clarify his ideas.

The second and third parts of the section dealt with a biblical understanding of cultural diversity. The primary focus of these two parts was to give students an understanding that cultural diversity is God’s design and that existence of Christians in the midst of cultural diversity is not a new scenario. Class lectures were given on the existence of people of God in the midst of other people who were religiously and culturally diverse, and how they adapted diverse elements from the surrounding cultures with new meanings to be used in the Jewish and Christian contexts.

At the end of this section students were asked to write a short paper on self-culture analysis. They were asked to prepare this paper by evaluating their own culture and bringing out some of the major aspects.

⁸ Serena Nanda and Richard L. Warms, *Culture Counts: A concise Introduction to Cultural Anthropology* (CA: Wadsworth Cengage Learning, 2009), 5.

⁹ Paul G. Hiebert, *Anthropological Insight for Missionaries* (Grand Rapids MI: Baker Book House, 1985), 30.

Section III – Understanding Culture

The third section of the course focused on giving students a few methods that can be used to understand different perspectives on culture. Many times people look at culture peripherally and on most occasions their observations will be wrong. Generally people see and listen to some event and understand it from the observer's cultural background. But in many instances that may be a problem. This section of the course was designed to create awareness in students to be cautious about their cultural observations, and a few methods were taught on how to understand culture or a cultural event authentically.

The first part of this section dealt with etic and emic views of culture – the view of a cultural insider and outsider. Students were taught with the help of different audio and video material from different cultures. Video and audio recordings of a few events were played to the students and they were asked to make their observations.¹⁰ Later the original context of the video was explained and why on most occasions their initial observations will be wrong. This exercise helped the students to have awareness in mind that there can be a great difference between their initial observation and actual reality. The primary material used for teaching etic and emic view was by Vida

¹⁰ One of the videos that was used was of African funeral dance. This video was mostly misunderstood by students as some festive event of great joy. Later it was explained as a funeral. This will create an understanding in the minds of students that their initial observations are not correct.

Chenoweth's book *Melodic Perception and Analysis*.¹¹ In this book Chenoweth gives a general understanding of etic and emic views and also several technical methods to analyze music to gain an emic view of musical structure. Several other materials were also used from musical as well as non-musical contexts to create deeper awareness in the minds of students.

The Second part of the section dealt with cultural analysis. The main focus was given to methods for understanding culture. After giving an understanding on etic and emic views of culture, students were taught a few techniques for progressing from an etic view of culture to an emic view. This was taught in our context because many New Theological College graduates do ministry and work as pastors and worship leaders among people groups that are different from theirs. This part mainly emphasized gaining cultural understanding by interviewing a culture bearer or cultural informant. Material used for this part was primarily taken from James P. Spradley's *The Ethnographic Interview*.¹² In this part of the course students were taught about who is an informant or a cultural bearer, how to locate a useful and effective cultural informant, and how to interview a cultural informant without offending them. Students were given an idea about what kind of questions to ask them and how to structure an interview without burdening and tiring the informant. Students were given lectures on various elements involved in this interview.

¹¹ Vida Chenoweth, *Melodic Perception and Analysis: A Manual on Ethnic Melody* (Ukarumpa: Papua New Guinea: Summer institute of Linguistics, 1986), 31-62.

¹² James P. Spradley, *The Ethnographic Interview*, (Fort Worth: USA, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich College Publishers, 1979), 25 – 68.

At the end of this part students were given an opportunity to actually practice the process of interviewing. As our student community represents a large number of diverse people groups, students were given an assignment to interview a person from another culture assigned by the teacher. They were asked to prepare an interview before hand and get it approved by the teacher, and then were asked to do the actual interview in different sessions and submit a report of their findings. They were asked to write a report of each interview session – both formal and informal – to see any progression they made from a peripheral etic view to an emic view of the informant's culture.

The third part of this section was aimed at giving some general understanding to students regarding Indian culture and major music systems in the country. Lectures were given on major music history periods from Indian history and different developments that took place in different periods in history. In this part of the course some lectures were given on Carnatic music of South India and Hindustani music of North India, and major instruments that are used in these musical systems. Indian music history at a very basic level and some of the major musicians of these musical systems were also introduced to the students with the help of several audio and video materials to make the students aware of differences and similarities of these musical systems. Students were also given an understanding about the folklore and instruments associated with these systems and were given understanding on how these folk music forms, instruments and other folk arts play a significant role in the cultural identity of the different people groups. They were also given awareness about the wide variety of

resources that become available in ministry if they tap into the folk music and arts resources.

Section IV – Christian Arts

In this section students were given some understanding about Christian arts. The first part of the section focused on giving a biblical foundation for using arts in worship and in the mission of the church. One of the primary resources used for the class was Francis Schaffer's *Art and the Bible*.¹³ This gave students awareness that arts are not a new thing introduced at this time of history, but are part of God's design that have been used in biblical history. Lectures were given on arts in the Bible and the history of the Christian church. The goal was to create openness in the mind of students to diverse art forms that exist in the country which are not used in a Christian context. It also helped them to see that human beings are artistic creatures, creative in every area of their lives, and how that creativity can be used effectively to better express themselves in Christian worship. Even as human beings are fallen, so their artistic expressions and creativity are also fallen. But redemption in Christ also means redemption of all these artistic forms. As human beings are redeemed for the purpose of worship, their art forms can also be redeemed for the purpose of worship. These lectures were designed with significant class discussions to ignite their minds and also to develop a positive approach to cultural

¹³ Francis A. Schaffer, *Art and the Bible*, (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 2006). 13 – 94.

artistic expressions in the context of worship. Some other materials that were used to discuss these topics were Hilary Brand and Adrienne Chaplin's *Art & Soul: Signposts for Christians in Arts*¹⁴ and Roberta R. King's *A Time to Sing: A Manual for the African Church*.¹⁵ Students were introduced to some exercises recommended by Roberta King as a means of redeeming songs from culture. Another video material that was used in this section of the course is by Thomas A. Kane titled *Dancing Church around the World*. This collection of indigenous artistic expressions of worship was used to help the students experience worship practices around the world. As some of the worship practices are radically different, it was used to start a discussion among the students.

Section V – Ethnomusicology and Ethnodoxology

At this part of the course the subjects of ethnomusicology and ethnodoxology were introduced to the students. The subject of ethnomusicology was introduced only towards the middle of the course because it was important for them to first understand the need of a subject like this. By the time students reached this section they should have a good understanding about Christian worship and indigenous worship as God's design. They also should have a good understanding about the complexity of culture and techniques to observe and analyze culture, and should have understanding about arts in

¹⁴ Hilary Brand and Adrienne Chaplin, *Art & Soul: Signposts for Christians in Arts*, (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2007), 48 – 66.

¹⁵ Roberta R. King, *A Time to Sing: A Manual for the African Church*, (Nairobi, Kenya: Evangel Publishing House, 1999), 35 – 56.

Christian worship and the need and possibility of using indigenous arts in worship. The earlier part of the syllabus was designed as a background to introduce the subject of ethnomusicology and ethnodoxology to them.

The first part of this session gave emphasis to lectures and discussions on different definitions of ethnomusicology. Instead of teaching different definitions independently, they were taught as a part of the history of the development of ethnomusicology. As was done in the historical review chapter of this dissertation, it was introduced as a part of history. That helped the students to gain understanding about the evolving nature of the subject and to understand the scope of ethnomusicology in the present context. Students were given an overview of the history of ethnomusicology before the term was introduced by Jaap Kunst and also the history after it. This process helped them to learn different definitions in the context and time period where they originated, and major viewpoints of the authors of each definition. It also helped them to compare the viewpoints of different ethnomusicologists. One of the primary materials used for this section was Timothy Rice's *Ethnomusicology: a Very Short Introduction*.¹⁶

This session also gave emphasis to the dual nature of ethnomusicology. There are ethnomusicologists who approach musical systems technically and study the structure of the musical system in itself. On the other side there are ethnomusicologists who approach the musical system as a functional art and study it as a part of human culture.

¹⁶ Timothy Rice, *Ethnomusicology: A Very Short Introduction*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014) 1 – 26.

By giving emphasis on the definition and teachings of Alan P. Merriam students were directed to giving more attention to studying music in culture.¹⁷

After giving them a good understanding of the secular discipline of ethnomusicology, students were given a definition for ethnodoxology, the Christian stream of ethnomusicology. The etymology of the word ethnodoxology was introduced to students and a definition of the word was given to them from Dave Hall who introduced the term.¹⁸ More emphasis was given to the definition by Brian Schrag and his description of the scope of the discipline of ethnodoxology found in an ethnodoxology edition of the *Mission Frontiers* journal.¹⁹ This gave them an overall understanding of the field of study and also its scope. Material from Ian Collinge's article "A Kaleidoscope of Doxology: Exploring Ethnodoxology and Theology" was also used to give a theological foundation to the newly introduced discipline.²⁰ This step by step introduction of the theme prepared them to explore the technical aspects of the discipline.

¹⁷ Alan P. Merriam, *The Anthropology of Music*, (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1964), 3.

¹⁸ Ian Collinge, "A Kaleidoscope of Doxology: Exploring Ethnodoxology and Theology", *Doon Theological Journal*, Vol. 8, No.1, March (2011), 37.

¹⁹ Brian Schrag, "Ethnodoxology; Facilitating Local Arts Expressions For Kingdom Purposes", in *Mission Frontiers Vol. 36, No.5* (September – October, 2014), 6 – 8.

²⁰ Ian Collinge, "A Kaleidoscope of Doxology", 37 – 57.

Section VI – Musical Styles

This section of the course was designed to introduce diverse musical styles to the students. Most of the students at New Theological College come with very little exposure to Indian and Western musical styles. Different musical styles were introduced to them with video examples to make them familiar with the styles. More emphasis was given to indigenous musical forms like *Bhajan*, *Kirtan*, *Quawali*, *Gazal* and other major musical styles that exist nationally in North India and South India. The goal of this session was to develop a love for indigenous musical forms. A short description was given about each of the musical forms by focusing on its origin, use and major use in the country. Students were directed to think about different musical genres and think of whether each was appropriate for worship or not. In India all the genres of music are not used in worship and there are social distinctions about what is religious and what is cultural.

At the end of this section students were asked to make a short description about the local musical forms that exist in their regions and present it to the class. Each student was given a 20-minute presentation time to talk about the musical forms and instruments that exist among their people group. They also needed to make an evaluation of the particular musical genres to see if they were appropriate to use in worship according to their culture.

At this part of the course an indigenous worship team who leads worship using indigenous worship music was invited and arranged to lead worship so that students

could experience it. One of the major problems of the past indigenization attempts were the failure to give an opportunity for people to experience it directly. There were several writings on contextualization of worship but people never got an opportunity to experience it. By inviting a worship team from the local region it helped the students to experience first-hand and participate in an indigenous worship service. The indigenous worship team was invited in the first week of February. They were from Rishikesh, one of the most important holy places for Hindus. They were involved in indigenous worship and mission activities.

Section VII – Research Methods

This Section of the course was focused on research methods to understand culture at a deeper level. It is a deeper level teaching of what was introduced in section III of the course. Some of the ethnomusicology methodologies were introduced at this level for gaining an emic view of culture. Rather than merely gaining the knowledge, research is conducted with a purpose. A few methods that were introduced are used to create a detailed description of the culture that can be used by others to work in the culture to bring changes in the people group on which they are focusing. Some methods are used as a tool to understand the basic characteristics of the culture. Some of the methods introduced are aimed at bringing social changes in the community that they are researching. Three methods of ethnomusicology research were introduced to the students – ethnographic method, grid-group theory and the participatory method.

A. Ethnographic Method

This part of the section was aimed at giving basic understanding to students about the ethnographic method of analyzing culture. Two basic materials were used as teaching material to give lectures and practical applications. The first one was Simone Kruger's *Ethnography in the Performing Arts: A Student Guide*²¹ and the second one was James Spradley's *The Ethnographic Interview*.²²

As an introduction to the section students were taught about quantitative and qualitative research methods and how ethnography comes under qualitative research. That was followed by lectures on how ethnography can help the researcher to gain understanding of the perspective of the people studied and meaning given to and placed on dance, drama and music.²³ They were also taught about the broad categories of applied and non-applied ethnographic research. According to Simone Kruger, applied ethnographic research is concerned with using the understanding gained in ethnographic research in order to solve a problem or to bring about a positive change in institutions, communities or groups. Non-applied ethnography focuses on studying a particular culture in a naturalistic setting in the performing arts. In this method the aim is to discover and

²¹ Simone Kruger, *Ethnography in the Performing Arts: A Student Guide*, [online] accessed on October 2015, <https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/sites/default/files/ethnography-in-the-performing-arts-a-student-guide.pdf>. Internet. 18- 86.

²² James Spradley, *The Ethnographic Interview*, 1 – 69.

²³ Simone Kruger, *Ethnography in the Performing Arts*, 18.

document a particular culture through intimate, face to face interaction with people.²⁴

Both of these approaches are needed in promoting contextualization of Christian worship because the applied ethnography method helps the researcher to make some impact directly on the people group that is researched. On the other hand the non-applied ethnography method and the documents that are prepared can be used by others who are initiating attempts for contextualization of worship among a particular people group.

Students were encouraged to read literature about the people group that they will be researching as a starting point but not to rely fully on the information from the book as they could be biased. But the information from the book could be used to formulate and plan their research and prepare questions to ask the informants.

Following the general introduction about the discipline, students were taught about the ethnographic research method of cultural participant-observation and open-ended interviewing. Merely transcribing music into Western music notation will give them only an etic view of the musical forms.²⁵ A researcher needs to become a cultural insider of the group that is studied to gain an emic perspective on cultural elements. They were taught about the methods for doing field work and taking field notes, collecting of audio and video materials and making observations and notes. Students were also taught

²⁴ Simone Kruger, *Ethnography in the Performing Arts*, 18.

²⁵ Timothy Rice, *Ethnomusicology: A Very Short Introduction*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 32.

about the ethical considerations of the research conducted and honoring the research participants.

Students were taught about finding the right cultural informants and conducting informal interviews to receive honest truthful responses from participants to gain first-hand knowledge about the culture. Lectures also covered the topic of how to ask questions from everyday lives and gain understanding of the culture. As Spradley puts it, “An ethnographer seeks out ordinary people with ordinary knowledge and builds on their common experience.”²⁶ Lectures also focused on how to ask questions in informal and semi-formal settings and how to ask open ended questions and give open ended prompts to the informants. This requires a reciprocal relationship between the researcher and the participants. Participants should not be interrupted in the conversations and should not be guided or constrained. It can be conducted with an individual or in small groups. Informal group interviews can help the people to open up more and make significantly informative conversations.

Students were given instructions about how to deal with informants with ethnical and social concerns. They are to be treated as human beings with dignity rather than merely as a source of information. The researcher was to communicate to the informant the purpose of the research, and his rights, interests and sensitivity must be safeguarded by the ethnographer. Their privacy must be protected and should not be exploited.

²⁶ James Spradley, *The Ethnographic Interview*, 25.

Students were also given lectures on how to conduct a participant-observation. The goal of participant-observation is to capture performance, events or situations as they happen, and the meaning of those events to the people involved.²⁷ Participant-observation pays close attention to sequence of events, settings, interactions and behavior of the people during the event. All of these observations will be documented systematically by the ethnographer. During the participant-observation the researcher is present and interacts with people when an activity or event is occurring. It can be an active participation like a resident or a part time participation. During the participation observation is made through the eyes of the ethnographer. Students were also cautioned that their observations are always filtered through interpretive frames and are never objective or neutral.²⁸ Students were also given what to observe and how to document it for further analysis and use. Participant-observation may also involve learning the particular art or musical form intensely so that the researcher can participate in the event. Students were also given suggestions regarding the field work by Bruno Nettl as a guide to informal interview and observation.²⁹

The ethnographic method will give the researcher a good deep understanding about the culture, worldview and art forms at a particular space and time. This will help the researcher to document major aspects about the culture and that information can

²⁷ Simone Kruger, *Ethnography in the Performing Arts*, 58.

²⁸ Simone Kruger, *Ethnography in the Performing Arts*, 74.

²⁹ Bruno Nettl, *Theory and Method in Ethnomusicology*, (London: Collier-Macmillan Limited, 1964), 73 – 81.

guide him how to go about contextualization of worship within the local congregation. It is a long term process which involves learning of local language, art forms and active participation in the events. The documents that are prepared from these observations and informal interview can guide the pastor to apply it in their context or it can be a resource for others who intend to work among those people groups.

Students of New Theological College music department could not be given an opportunity to try this method in a ministry context as they are in the college only for ten months and they could not spare several weeks in the field. In the long term it would be advisable and significantly useful to attempt this method among local people groups so that students can attempt this method as they learn and can be guided in research by the teacher. It is suggested that students could attempt participant-observation and informal interview as a project for their vacation practical ministry requirement.

B. Participatory Method

This part of the section gave emphasis to the participatory method for contextualization of Christian worship. This method gives importance to the participation of local community members in the process. Lectures started by clarifying the distinction between the ethnographic method and the participatory method. The reason to clarify it is because there are writers who refer to the ethnographic method also as participatory

observation.³⁰ Students were clearly given the difference between these two methods on the basis of who is participating. In the ethnographic method, the researcher is participating in the culture to make observation and analysis. But in the participatory method, the researcher is being the part of the culture and involved in the process to facilitate the participation of the people of the local community. In other words, in the ethnographic method the researcher is the participant but in the participatory method emphasis is given to people of the researched community as the primary participants. Although the researcher is also involved in activities his goal is to be a catalyst to the process of community participation.

Two major resources that were used to teach this course were Brian Schrag's *Creating Local Arts Together*³¹ and Somesh Kumar's *Methods for Community Participation*.³² Several other articles and audio and video materials from different participatory method practitioners from all around the world were used to make the class effective. The edited work by James R. Krabill titled *Worship and Mission for the Global*

³⁰ James R. Spradley, *Participant Observation*, (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1980), V.

³¹ Brian Schrag, *Creating Local Arts Together: A manual to Help Communities Reach their Kingdom Goals*, (Pasadena: William Carey Library, 2013).

³² Somesh Kumar, *Methods for Community Participation: A Complete Guide for Practitioners*, (New Delhi, India: Vistaar Publications, 2002).

Church: An Ethnodoxology Handbook was used as a major source for reading material for students and also as a source of examples.³³

Brian Schrag's Creating Local Arts Together (CLAT) method is a participatory method founded on three realities that are mentioned at the beginning of his book. The first reality is that people communicate in almost seven thousand languages around the world. People convey ideas by spoken words. They also communicate artistically through song, drama, dance, visual arts, story, and other means. Secondly, all communities have non-existent or imperfect relationships with God. All communities struggle with social upheaval, violence, disease, anger, sexual immorality, anxiety, and fear. Thirdly, God gave every community unique gifts of artistic communication to tell the Truth. He gave every community unique gifts of artistic communication to bring healing and hope and joy in response to problems. Many of these gifts, however, lie unused, misused, or dying.³⁴ Based in these three realities this participatory method is designed.

This method starts the discussion by talking about the significance of local arts in communication and social aspects particularly in bringing social changes. This method keeps a very positive and gracious attitude to all art forms, but at the same time also recognizes that all art forms are not appropriate for kingdom purposes at a particular time. All the art forms are marred with sin but God can redeem them all. This method

³³ James R. Krabill, *Worship and Mission for the Global Church: An Ethnodoxology Handbook*, (Pasadena: William Carey Library, 2013).

³⁴ Brian Schrag and Julisa Rowe, *Creating Local Arts Together: A Shorter Manual to Help Communities Reach Their Kingdom Goals* (Texas: International Council of Ethnodoxologists, 2015), 1.

keeps a very sensitive attitude towards community members and their perspective to particular art forms. Some of them may have significant association with immoral or idolatrous activities and may not be appropriate in a particular time in a particular Christian local community. But Schrag keeps a perspective that all things will be redeemed by God for himself (Matthew 19:28). He also believes in the work of the Holy Spirit that leads the local believers in using appropriate art forms at a particular time in history. We should not limit the use of arts to our familiar uses of them as arts can be used even in areas that are not familiar for ethnodoxologists. This method will help the art worker or ethnodoxologist to think beyond the familiar uses of arts in liturgy.³⁵ This method has seven steps for co-creating local arts with community members with a specific kingdom goal. As a part of the course of ethnomusicology the kingdom purpose is to create culturally appropriate worship services for a local people group in a particular locality. Following are the seven steps of the CLAT manual:³⁶

1. Meet the community and its arts
2. Specify kingdom goals
3. Select effects, content, genre, and events
4. Analyze an event containing the chosen genre

³⁵ Brian Schrag and Julisa Rowe, *Creating Local Arts Together: A Shorter Manual to Help Communities Reach Their Kingdom Goals*, 3.

³⁶ Brian Schrag, *Creating Local Arts Together: A manual to Help Communities Reach their Kingdom Goals*, XXV.

5. Spark creativity
6. Improve new works
7. Integrate and celebrate for continuity.

Each of these steps was explained in detail in the class with examples so that they could understand it clearly. At the end of the explanation these steps were demonstrated in the class with a representative from a particular people group functioning as informant and also as representative of the particular people group.

Every step of the CLAT co-creation method is participatory in nature and lead by the people of the particular people group. The ethnodoxologist functions as a catalyst and guide to walk the community through the process. This method aims at making the process a people's initiative so that they will have ownership and a desire to continue in the process. Although this process involves continuous research on the part of the ethnodoxologist, it is used as a tool to guide the people group through the process. In this method the ethnodoxologist is not making any decision for the people but rather people make choices and decisions for themselves and it results in a people's movement from grass-roots upward.

Somesh Kumar's proposal of community participation is neither material for contextualization nor a method for arts or music. It is a method written for community participation for social development. This material was used for this course because of some of the impressive and proved methods that he suggests to facilitate community

participation. It is also written in an Indian context, understanding the people of the country and general attitude of people. The author was involved in administrative service in India and was significantly involved in social activities of different people groups. His material is a great resource to talk about community participation, even though the purpose of the course is to facilitate contextualization of worship.

Somesh Kumar defined the term participation from different perspectives incorporating different aspects of it. He also listed out different kinds of community participation and describes them through the use of simple graphs that can be easily understood and remembered by the students. His recommendations for using interactive participation and self-mobilization can be understood as the ideal means to facilitate contextualization in the Indian context. His suggestion to view participation as an end rather than a means is a very significant aspect to understand to make contextualization a community movement. His detailed descriptions on advantages and disadvantages of community participation and its obstacles also are very valuable information for students preparing to be equipped for the task of contextualization of worship in India.³⁷ All his descriptions are not useful for the purpose of contextualization of worship. But there are several significant pieces of information and methods that are described by the author in the book that can be of great use for understanding and facilitating community participation, especially because of the Indian perspective of the author.

³⁷ Somesh Kumar, *Methods for Community Participation: A Complete Guide for Practitioners*, 24 – 29.

C. Grid Group Cultural Theory

Grid group cultural theory by Mary Douglas was also taught to the students. The purpose of teaching this theory was to help the students understand the diversity and similarity between people and their relationship bonds in different societies. Societies are divided into four different categories according to their social functioning – fatalism, collectivism, individualism and egalitarianism. Students were taught how people are similar or different in each of these groups and how strong or weak the bonds are between the members of the community. Teaching this theory at a very basic level helped the students to gain some basic understanding of society and its functioning, and also gave them an idea regarding how to influence a particular group to bring a change in the Christian worship of a community by incorporating culturally appropriate artistic elements. The primary material used for these lecture was Mary Douglas' *Natural symbols: Explorations in Cosmology*.³⁸ This part of the course was not emphasized much due to lack of time, and because the basic purpose was only to make the students understand that in some people groups people are very similar to one another whereas in some other societies they are very different from each other, and also their social bonds are different in each society. These things must be taken into consideration when they approach a particular people group's worship practices with the goal of contextualization of worship.

³⁸ Mary Douglas, *Natural Symbols: Explorations in Cosmology*, (London: Routledge, 1996), Loc. 1413 – 1650.

Section VIII – Applied Ethno-Arts

This section was aimed at introducing the area of applied ethno-arts to the students. Applied ethno-art is the application of ethnomusicological theory and methodology to support the goals and beliefs of a group, culture, or subculture.³⁹ This part of the course focused on telling some of the examples of application of ethnomusicology principles in different parts of the world. This section was incorporated with the goal that students need to understand that there are many people in the world who successfully attempted these methods in the worship of different people groups. The book written by Frank Fortunato with several different authors titled *All the World is Singing* was used as the primary source for this part of the course.⁴⁰ It was hoped the descriptions and the accompanying CD with several audio examples from different people groups around the world would enlarge the perspective of the students regarding worship music. This section was placed at this part of the course because it is lighter in content and helps the student to relax and enjoy music from different parts of the world after an intense theoretical section of the course.

³⁹ Brian Schrag and Paul Neely, *All the World Will Worship*, (Texas: EthnoDoxology Publishing, 2003), 65.

⁴⁰ Frank Fortunato, *All the World is Singing: Glorifying God through the Worship Music of the Nations*. (GA: Authentic Publishing, 2006).

Section IX – Ethnomusicology as a Tool for the Contextualization of Worship

This section of the course dealt with practical applications of ethnomusicology methods and findings for the purpose of contextualization of worship. The main focus of this part was on how different art forms can help an ethnomusicologist and the people group that he is working with to develop and sustain contextualized worship forms. Here the class moved into discussions on how to make worship culturally appropriate without falling into the problem of religious syncretism or offending the members of the local community. Different elements of worship like singing, preaching, prayers and the Lord's Supper were discussed from the Indian context to see how these elements can be made indigenous. Rather than giving particular methods to students, it gave overall understanding to them regarding the major foundations on which they should build contextualized worship.

This section also talked about some of the unused art forms in the culture like proverbs, storying, cultural dances and painting that can be effectively used in worship by involving artists in the worshipping community. This provides community participation, ownership and will result in sustained contextualized worship among the people groups. Each student was encouraged to think about Christian rituals and cultural rituals and how some of the cultural rituals can be redeemed for Christian use in worship. Examples and comparisons were provided from other religious traditions in India which are very much part of Indian culture. Students were encouraged to make observations into the reasons for the cultural alienation of Indian Christianity.

The last part of the section discussed the issue of a Christian response to religiously originated cultural events among certain people groups. Several people groups in India have certain cultural festivals which have a mythological story connected primarily to Hinduism. A few examples like the festival of *Onam* in South India and *Deepavali* which is familiar to the North Indian community were discussed. Rather than evolving an answer, discussions were directed to how Christians can reinterpret these events into the Christian context and celebrate with people of the country as an opportunity to share the gospel. Discussion also was directed toward important Christian festivals and how to celebrate them in an Indian context and make them a community event of all the people rather than limiting it to the Christian community alone.

Section X – Cultural Integration and Adaptation in the Local Church’s Worship

This was the concluding section of the course. This section talked about the process of integrating cultural elements in worship. The first part of the section discussed the significance of knowing the denominational and local church’s doctrine before attempting contextualization of Christian worship by incorporating local elements in worship. Students were reminded again that our primary goal is to facilitate heart worship of the people rather than promoting cultural arts. Students were encouraged to review the most important doctrinal aspects that should guide their planning of worship and other related activity of their congregations.

The second part of the section discussed the cultural elements of the local people group and their significance in the identity of the people. How these local elements are connected with culture and their roots to other religions in the local community were discussed. Students were encouraged to think of dance forms, musical forms and other artistic expressions from their local people groups and how they are associated with other secular and religious elements. Questions were asked about the possibility of the redemption of these cultural elements for use in worship.

The third part of the last section discussed how to incorporate cultural elements in the worship of the church. Students were encouraged to think about how to incorporate certain elements they think are appropriate in their local context to the worship of the church. Students were given some examples of the processes through which different people incorporated cultural elements in worship using different processes.

The course concluded by reminding the students about the significance of not doing anything against the biblical foundation on which our worship is developed and not to compromise on any foundational aspects of the Christian faith. A quotation from Marva Dawn was used as a concluding statement “We make use of the cultural forms, new and old, but we dare never let up in the struggle to make sure they are consistent with the ultimate eternal world to which we belong.”⁴¹

⁴¹ Marva J. Dawn, *Reaching Out without Dumbing Down: A Theology of Worship for This Urgent Time*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm B. Eerdmans Publishing Co. 1995), 10.

Post-Course Survey Questions and Responses

A post-course survey was conducted at the end of the course in ethnomusicology. The goal of the post-course survey was to gain understanding about changes in students' perspective on worship using indigenous art forms in worship in comparison to the pre-course survey. In distinction with the pre-course survey which was primarily objective with short descriptions, the post-course survey was more descriptive. The reasoning behind this was to give them an opportunity to reflect clearly. All seventeen students in the class took part in the post-course survey. They were given a week to complete the survey.⁴² The survey carried 10% of their final grade for the course. There were nine questions in the survey. Following are the questions, the reasoning behind asking the questions, and their responses:

1. The first question was on what are the major aspects of Christian worship to them. Although there was no direct question regarding the important aspects in worship in the pre-course survey, there were several questions that demanded a biblical reflection. The reasoning behind asking this question was to evaluate the biblical foundation on worship they gained from the semester long course.

Before taking the course some of the students understood 'praise and worship' as singing western contemporary songs. Few of them reflected that singing Indian songs also is 'praise and worship.'

⁴² The survey was given out on March 7th, 2015 and was expected to be returned by students on March 14, 2015.

Before taking the course the singing part of worship was predominantly viewed as worship by many students. In the post-course survey nine students mentioned that they understood other elements like preaching, the Lord's Supper, offering, fellowship and even Sunday school to be part of worship as well.

Indigenous music and arts forms are understood as the medium of worship by most students. The present scenario in church is that the worship leader with a worship band is doing most of the singing and people are listening. All the students in the class mentioned congregational participation as one of the major concerns for them in worship.

Conducting worship in the language that is understandable for the congregation was also mentioned. The Bible gives freedom for each people group to design worship according to their culture. Fifteen students stated that culturally appropriate worship is the New Testament design of worship.

All the seventeen students in the class emphasized the importance of teaching the congregation on worship as one of the major steps they will do once they return to their congregation.

All of them mentioned the significance of being Bible centered in worship as one of the major aspects that they will emphasize. Understanding worship with biblical foundations will bring resolution for many problems that the church is facing regarding worship music style and many other areas. The congregation will be able to

understand that using indigenous musical and other art forms are acceptable in worship if they understand worship with biblical foundations.

In worship the congregation is not merely focused on God but we also have a responsibility in building one another up in faith. Edification of the believers is understood as very important part of Christian worship.

2. The second question was regarding their future plans as worship leaders in their local congregation. The question was targeted to see if they have any plans for incorporating indigenous elements in worship as they start their ministry as worship leaders of their local congregations.

All the students in the class expressed their hope to be more creative in worship. All of them agreed that there should be more creativity in worship to make it more participatory and make it different by using worship forms that are different from the conventional patterns. Several of them felt the urgent need of involving church members who are gifted with different abilities in worship. Many of them felt that church should not be a place for musicians and preachers alone.

All the students in the class felt the need of more teaching on worship to the congregations. Church members are reluctant to accept changes and creativity because they are not taught biblically about worship.

Fifteen of the students mentioned their desire to incorporate indigenous music in worship. As the church exists in India it is significant for our worship to be

more Indian and also it is God's design. God desires every tongue and tribe to worship Him using their heart music and worship style.

Eight students in the class expressed their concern that they are not proficient with any indigenous music forms and they felt the need to get training in Indian musical forms before they enter into the ministry of worship leadership.

Two students planned to stick to the present order of worship but initially add indigenous musical instruments and musical forms and eventually other art forms in worship. Several students felt that initially they need to attempt indigenous dance forms outside the worship service in special events of the church. They felt that will open them up for its use in worship.

The whole class of students expressed their desire that their congregations need to experience a purely indigenous worship. All of them said that their actual experience of attending an indigenous worship service in the college changed their perspective towards using indigenous arts forms in worship. Many of the students plan to invite a group who conduct *satsang* to their area so that people can have a first-hand experience of indigenous worship. Students felt that as it changed their unfavorable perspective towards indigenous worship, it can transform their congregations as well. They also emphasized the need of teaching the congregation about biblical foundations of indigenous worship before they attempt anything in the church.

3. The third question was regarding the criterion they will use to choose musical forms in worship. The goal of the question was to see if they will choose musical genres and musical instruments with some biblical and cultural concerns.

There were three students in the class who did not understand the question clearly. All other fourteen students expressed answers with different criteria to choose musical and other art forms.

All the students expressed that their primary criteria will be scripture. Where scripture is silent about specific art forms, they use edification of believers as the criteria. The art forms that they use in worship must edify the believers and help them to worship God in a better way.

Many of them thought of initially avoiding musical forms, instruments, dances and other art forms that have significant religious association. They will start the process of indigenization by using some indigenous instruments like *tabala*, *dolak*, *harmonium* and a few other local instruments that do not have serious religious connotations.

Around eight students directly or indirectly stated that their primary consideration will be the preference of the congregations after doing the teaching on contextualization of worship. Most students understand that the congregation may not allow making a huge change at the beginning, but it is important to give time for them to make the change rather than forcing it.

Around ten students plan to make a study of the people group that they are working in and plan to make it a participatory method. If the songs and arts forms are coming from within the worshipping community, they feel that the change will be easier and more acceptable. So the initial criteria will be to tap into the musical and other artistic skills available within the worshipping community.

All the students in the class expressed that congregational participation will be a major criteria in all that they do and attempt in worship.

4. The fourth question was specifically to evaluate their perspective towards using indigenous musical instruments and musical forms. This question was added here because the above three questions were more generic. A specific question like this was needed to compare with the pre-course survey which was more specific and objective.

The whole class was supportive of using indigenous musical instruments in worship. Many of them feel that as Indians it is important for us to love and use our rich indigenous artistic and musical expressions to worship God. Many of them felt that the church has missed something over the years by remaining Western and needs to become an indigenous community to make an impact in worship and mission.

Many of them expressed that biblically God expects them to worship using indigenous art and musical forms which are close to their heart.

They also expressed their reservation in initially using some musical instruments and dance forms in worship which have strong religious associations. Instruments like *Sitar*, *Tembura*, *Veena* and a few other indigenous instruments that are regularly seen in Hindu worship gatherings and are associated with the idols of Hinduism must be avoided in the early stages of contextualization. Many of the students felt that it is better to avoid the nationally recognized instruments but explore the possibilities with local musical instruments that are connected with folk music of the people groups.

Three students expressed that the musical instruments do not matter but what matters more is if people are able to worship with their whole heart and express their worship.

Several students in the class expressed the urgent need for them to learn an indigenous instrument. Two students expressed that they never thought that their popular local musical instrument could be of any use in worship. There are several people in the congregation who are capable of using those instruments and that opens up a lot of possibility of congregational participation.

5. The fifth question was also a specific question about how the course in ethnomusicology impacted their understanding and attitude toward indigenous music and musical instruments in worship and missions. The goal of this question was to make them evaluate their own change in perspective before and after the course.

All the students of the class stated the positive impact and change of perspective that was brought by the semester long course. Following are the summary of comments made by students.

- a. The Course on ethnomusicology made them think about indigenous worship music and its significance to Christians today.
- b. It also brought to realization that many songs that they were singing in a local language were not actually Indian but were merely Western songs in Indian language.
- c. Attending several indigenous worship events during the course helped them to understand that they can worship God more intimately and deeply using indigenous worship forms than Western music.
- d. The course in ethnomusicology helped them to think of their local congregation using local musical and art forms. It is not necessary to borrow things from Hinduism but we have lot of other possibilities within the local culture.
- e. It also helped them to understand the significance of all the members of the local congregation experiencing an indigenous worship form. Experiencing indigenous worship first hand will transform their perspective.
- f. The course also helped them to understand the need of biblical foundations for contextualization. Many past attempts of indigenization were rejected by

congregations because they lacked biblical foundations and clear understanding of local culture.

- g. Song translation alone will not do indigenization. Language is only one part of contextualization. There are several other aspects that need to be radically changed to make worship more acceptable to each people group.
- h. It helped to understand how churches in India are so Westernized although we are using local languages in worship. Wearing sandals to the church, sitting on a chair for worship, not taking a bath in the morning before going for worship, reluctance to kneel in worship, wearing casual clothes for worship and even modern hair styles in worship etc. play a major role in making church not acceptable to the Indian context. The above mentioned things are avoided by almost all other religions in India except Christians.
- i. This course made us think why we are worshipping God in a Western way when we have a rich culture with beautiful music and artistic heritage.
- j. This course helped us to see the large possibilities of congregational participation in worship within the local congregations. One does not need to be a piano player or guitarist to be with the worship team. People who play indigenous instruments can also be involved in worship and enrich the worship experience of the community.

- k. This course helped us to think locally about our people group, our art forms and explore the possibilities of using those musical instruments in worship.
 - l. This course taught us the significance of studying our people group and culture before we formulate our worship. Worship should be participatory and changes in worship also must be brought using congregational participation.
 - m. Culturally appropriate worship can unite the congregation more closely and make them feel proud of their identity. This will help the Christians to be more nationalistic and make them love their nation and people of the nation more dearly.
 - n. This course taught us to think creatively about worship and explore possibilities within the culture to be more creative.
6. The sixth question was regarding the specific topics in the course that they felt most useful in their future ministry as worship leaders. The goal of the question was to evaluate the syllabus and preserve and develop further the topics that the students felt useful.

Biblical foundations of contextualization and ethnomusicology were the topic of the syllabus that was appreciated by the whole class. All the students of the class wrote positive comments about the topic and felt that it is really important to teach it to the members of the church.

Except for two students the other fifteen students mentioned the participatory method as a topic that they found very useful. Students felt that it is very practical in every local church congregation and it is possible for every pastor. Many students felt that indigenization will not be a difficult goal to achieve if it is a people's movement.

Several students felt the lectures on the biblical foundation of cultural diversity to be very useful. Many of them never understood culture as God's design.

The introductory part of the syllabus which focused on the need of contextualization also was found useful by a few students. Some of them never thought about worship as something that needed to be culturally appropriate.

Self-culture analysis was found very useful by most of the students. Many of them thought that they knew well about their culture, but they realized the deficiency of their understanding when they started writing it.

Understanding worship from an Indian perspective and thinking about planning worship from an Indian context was a new topic for many students and most of them found it as very useful. It helped them to reflect on how some of the things that we do are not accepted by people culturally.

For a few students, audio and video examples and guest lectures by practicing ethnomusicologists in different cultures was a most useful part of the course.

All of the members of the class felt the introduction of the topic of ethnomusicology and its scope in Christian worship and missions was the most important part of the course.

7. The seventh question was regarding the areas of the course that they felt not of much use in worship. The Goal of the question was to evaluate the syllabus and eliminate or restructure the areas in the syllabus that they felt to be not so useful or less interesting.

A lecture on grid-group theory was found not so useful by students. Students said that the topic was not very convincing and useful. Many of them felt grid-group theory was too complex and not understandable through a few classes of lectures.

Lectures of diverse musical styles were not very useful as it was redundant with their course of Music Appreciation.

The ethnographic method was understood as very useful for all the students in the class. But they felt that a few lectures on ethnographic method will not make them capable of doing any significant work among any people group.

They felt the need of audio and video examples to be from within the Indian context rather than taking them from other cultural contexts.

8. The eighth question was regarding the impact of audio visuals that were used in the class. Students were very happy to see and listen to audio and video material on

worship during the class hours. The goal of this question was to see if they had any impact on their perspective.

All the students of the class appreciated the use of audio and video examples for the ethnomusicology course. Many of them mentioned that seeing and listening to audio and video material helped them to understand the significance and complexity of the topic that was discussed in the course.

One student felt that using too many video materials was manipulative and was kind of a push to change their perspective.

Listening to the music and seeing the dances from other cultural contexts helped them to understand the cultural diversity within the country of India and other people groups around the world.

Audio visuals helped them to see the beauty of God's creative diversity in different cultures.

Audio visuals with following lectures helped them to understand that our initial perspective on culture is very rarely right. It takes intentional effort to understand cultural art forms from an insider's perspective.

9. The ninth question was an open space for their general comments and concerns. The goal of this space was to give them freedom to express themselves freely and also to understand some of their concerns regarding their ministry as worship leaders.

Three students expressed the need of talking with pastors and church leadership regarding possible changes that can be brought in worship. They also expressed their concern that some of the older leadership in the church will not be willing for a change and it will be almost impossible to introduce new things. Many of their congregations never had any changes in worship for the past couple decades.

All the students mentioned that the course of ethnomusicology without practical application in the field is not effective. All of them felt that doing ethnomusicology practically under the supervision of the teacher would be of great use.

Conclusion

The semester long training in ethnomusicology significantly changed the perspective of the students. The pre-course survey showed that they had very limited understanding of worship and their rejection of indigenous art was not founded on any biblical grounds. Lack of biblical foundation was one of the major reasons for rejection of indigenous worship style. The post-course survey points to the fact that their perspective has changed radically after the semester long training. Many of them seem open to attempt indigenous art forms in worship rather than completely rejecting without even attempting it.

Attending indigenous worship events removed their defensive attitude towards indigenous worship forms. Most of the students in the class never experienced authentic

indigenous worship and an opportunity to attend it brought tremendous change in their perspective.

It also gave them an opportunity to look into their local culture for indigenous resources for worship rather than looking at musical forms and dance forms that are greatly influenced by Hinduism, Islam or other major religions in India. Local culture was understood as a great resource for creativity and indignity.

This course also helped them to understand the reality of culture and the significance of understanding culture in the ministry of worship leading. Christians who belong to a certain people group often isolate themselves from the cultural and social events of the community and it result in isolating them from the people group to which they belong. They often act as aliens to the culture to which they actually belong by adhering to Western worship styles. This course helped the students to understand that it is not necessary to alienate from culture but it is more important to preserve their cultural identity as Christians and bring transformation to culture by redeeming diverse art forms for the glory of God.

CHAPTER FIVE

IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSION

Introduction

Contextualization is a concept that has been discussed in theological circles for many decades. But churches in India are becoming more and more Westernized and losing their Indian identity. With the serious influences of globalization and Western media, Indian church worship services are becoming imitations of the Western contemporary worship style. Discussion on contextualization remains an academic exercise in seminaries and other academic circles, rather than a reality within the church. In that scenario the goal of this thesis project was to explore the discipline of ethnomusicology as a tool to apply contextualization at the grassroots of the church's life. This chapter is an attempt to bring to light some of the implications that can be drawn from the study that was conducted at the music department of Luther W. New Theological College, Dehradun, India. The goal of this chapter is to bring out and analyze the impacts of the study and suggest some recommendations for future worship leadership training programs in the country. Impacts are mainly analyzed by comparing the pre-course and post-course surveys conducted before and after teaching the semester long course in ethnomusicology.

Implications of the Course in Ethnomusicology

A. Positive Implications

One of the major impacts of the course on ethnomusicology was on the understanding of worship from an indigenous perspective. Although definitions used for worship are written by Western authors, classes on worship were taught with several practical applications of the definitions in the Indian context. For example, Daniel Block states in his definition that worship involves physical action.¹ Students were directed to discuss how this applies to the Indian context in regard to issues such as removing sandals before entering the place of worship, physical cleansing before coming for worship and wearing religiously appropriate clothes for worship. Understanding the very concept of worship from an indigenous perspective helped the students to think about worship with the Indian context in mind. Worship gestures like kneeling and prostrating are foundational biblical teachings that are more appropriate in the Indian context than singing with lifted hands and vigorous body movements.

This course on ethnomusicology helped the students to think about contextualization of worship as a biblical concept rather than a concept only taught in seminaries. Many students never understood contextualization of worship as biblical and God's design for the church. Many of them had the perspective that it is something forced upon the church. Several of the past attempts went too far into Hindu religious rituals and religious syncretism. These attempts created a fear in the minds of believers to attempt anything in the direction of contextualization of worship. Many students felt the need of

significantly increasing the biblical teaching of worship in their congregations. Many of them never studied worship from the biblical perspective. Understanding worship and contextualization of worship from a biblical perspective helped them to understand and accept the concept of contextualization and the discipline of ethnomusicology without been defensive.

Another major impact was in the understanding of students regarding worship arts. Although many artistic things were involved in the worship services, music was the only thing that was accepted as an art that is appropriate to be used in worship. This course gave them a different understanding about congregational participation in worship. Church is not a place for singers and musicians alone, but people who are talented in different other art forms also can be used in Christian worship. This understanding helped the students to think about all the possible artists in the local congregations who can be used in different activities of the church and make worship more creative. Many students could think of incorporating many members of the church who are capable of playing local instruments in the worship of the church.

Another significant change that happened to the students after the course was their perspective on using indigenous art forms in worship. Students who originally rejected the use of indigenous musical forms like *gazals*, *bhajans* and *Kirtans* came to feel that they should attempt to use those musical forms in worship for the church which belongs to India. Their answers in the post-course survey reflected a rise in national feeling towards church in a positive way. The negative perspective of the class towards indigenous dance forms was changed after the course and students responded positively

¹ Daniel Block, *For the Glory of God*, 746.

to the using of dance forms in worship, although they all felt that it needs to be incorporated gently.

Attending an indigenous worship during the course and experiencing it firsthand outside their local congregational context really helped many students to accept the concept of contextualization. Many people who criticize contextualized Christian worship services have never experienced it directly. Attending an indigenous worship service after gaining good biblical foundations on contextualization of worship helped them to understand the beauty of worshipping God using indigenous worship expressions. Until then many of them never understood what they had been missing before. Many students reflected that indigenous worship forms helped them to worship God more deeply and express their worship clearly using familiar musical forms.

Several students in the group were motivated to conduct a study of their people group and wanted to use the participatory method to bring changes to their worship and also other social activities. Many of them decided to tap into the artistic resources that are available within their community. Before the course many of them did not even think about the resources that existed within their worshipping community. The self-culture analysis after teaching the section of the syllabus on culture helped the students to understand that they have thought only peripherally about their own cultures, and that they knew very little about their own cultures. It made them aware of the need of studying culture using ethnomusicology methods to explore the possibilities that exist within their community. The course in ethnomusicology impacted positively in

encouraging students to look at their local community for resources that can be used to make worship more creative, indigenous and participatory.

This course also opened their eyes to see the huge diversity and beauty that exists within culture. It helped them to see cultural diversity as God's creation and rejoice in the diversity, and at the same time uphold the uniqueness of their own people group. It helped the students who took the course to value their culture and different artistic elements within the culture.

It made students think critically about worship and all that they do in worship. In many of their answers students pointed out about the religious associations of certain musical and dance forms and the need for handling those associations carefully rather than just ignoring them. In the past the art forms that had religious associations were ignored by the church, and by using Western art forms the church was attempting to play safe. After the course students felt the need of taking initiative to make worship more culturally acceptable.

This course helped them to think about musical instruments and other artistic forms that exist locally and are not significant nationally. There are musical instruments and dance forms existing in folk traditions that do not have significant religious associations. Many students were motivated to explore those folk music traditions from their local context.

Several students in the class were motivated to learn Indian instruments. Students who argued against the use of indigenous musical forms decided to take lessons on *Sitar*, *Tabala* and other indigenous instruments. By the middle of the semester, there

were six students in the music department who joined *Sitar* classes. Although the *Sitar* has significant religious association, students were motivated to learn it because of their renewed perspective that there is nothing inherently bad in any art form.

This course also helped the students to evaluate their own worship tradition. This course gave awareness to students that the songs that they were singing in local languages were not actually local songs. They were merely Western songs that were just translated into local languages, or regional songs composed in Western style. Students expressed their desire to sing more authentic songs from their regions.

There was an awareness created by the course that indigenization is not implicitly just the copying of Hindu or other religious practices. Every people group and their culture will have several art forms and social practices that do not have strong religious associations. There are also elements in every culture that are religiously neutral or seen in all the religions in a society. Those elements can be easily used in Christian worship to make it more indigenous, and gradually even other art forms that have more religious associations also can be redeemed.

The course in ethnomusicology helped the students to understand the reasons behind wrong perspectives on Christianity held by other religious traditions in India. None of the religious traditions in India will wear sandals inside the place of worship, nor wear casual Western clothes during worship. But with the emergence of contemporary trends in worship, younger generations imitate casual Western attire and hair styles as they attend worship services. Students were able to gain awareness about how these Western imitations are looked down upon by Indian society and how they contradict

Indian religiosity. Indian culture has certain demands about the religious devotional life of any religion. Very often churches in India have failed to meet those social expectations. The course in ethnomusicology helped the students to seriously consider and evaluate what the social expectations of Christian religious practices are within their local contexts.

This course also made them to understand the diversity of the church within India and around the globe. There was a rise in nationalistic feelings while understanding the beauty of the Body of Christ around the globe. Students were also able to understand and appreciate that their local culture and cultural artistic expressions are worthy to be used in worship.

The participatory method of contextualization of worship was greatly appreciated by students. This method can be implemented by the person who is not trained in music but is just sensitive to culture. That makes the method more practical and it can be taught to any pastor of any local congregations. The role of the pastor or the worship leader in participatory methods is that of a facilitator and guide. This method was welcomed by students and many of them felt it is possible to use it in their context.

Watching and listening to several audio and video materials helped the students to think of indigenization of worship as a global reality and necessity. Listening to tremendous changes that were brought through the process of indigenization to local congregations around the world motivated students to attempt it within their people group or among the people to whom they were ministering.

B. Things to Change and Add in Ethnomusicology Training

There are several aspects in the course that need to be added, modified or removed from the course. Student evaluations and their responses in the class reflected some of the problems in the course. Making these changes can make the course more effective and meaningful for students.

The absence of a practical application of ethnomusicology experience was one of the major drawbacks of the course. Students had no opportunity outside the campus to try out what they were learning. The ethnography method and participatory method require more practice under the supervision of the teacher before students can actually do it in their communities. The geographical location of the college and unfavourable religious atmosphere in the neighboring villages prevented us from sending the students out for practical training. The need for experience in practical application is inevitable for a course in ethnomusicology and that needs to be incorporated to bring the best out of this training. It would be good to send the students to different churches in the nearby areas for a couple weeks for practical training, with the teacher making a visit to them on location to give them advice and make evaluations.

Inviting ethnomusicologists and anthropologists who work among people groups for guest lectures can be very effective. People who are actually working as ethnomusicologists can bring in much deeper understanding from their experiences compared to the teacher who lives within the walls of the seminary. Some sections of the syllabus like explaining the participatory method and the ethnographic method need a background of more practical experience.

The course that was conducted in New Theological College incorporated only one session with an indigenous worship leader. That session was the most effective part of the course. Many students who were very defensive about indigenous worship forms were changed and started appreciating the course after their attendance in the indigenous worship service. Incorporating more such events during the course would have been very effective. There also should have been an opportunity for students to plan a whole worship service incorporating elements from different people groups. Teaching this course pointed to the significance and the need of people attending indigenous worship gatherings as it was very transformative for the students who took the course in ethnomusicology.

Teaching grid-group theory was not effective. Many students felt that it was a part of the syllabus that was not useful and many of them did not understand the concept well. Either this section needs to be removed from the syllabus or should be taught by someone who is capable of handling this social theory. While making the syllabus this seemed to be potentially effective, but more self-learning is needed to teach it.

This course incorporated a lot of video material and one student felt that it was manipulative. Overuse of the video material should be avoided to prevent the course from being manipulative.

Most of the audio, video and narrative examples in the course were taken from outside the country of India. The non-availability of published material in India was the primary reason to take illustrations from outside the Indian context. But choosing illustrations from outside India contradicts a key principle of ethnomusicology which

primarily focuses on developing indigenous Christian worship. It is very significant to collect ample audio, video and narrative material from different people groups in the country to be used in the class for the purpose of illustrations.

This course was designed as a two credit course. But it needs to be restructured as four credits to get at least four hours of class every week. To teach the syllabus effectively with more class discussions and more detailed explanation it is important to redesign it for four credit hours.

Evaluation

Offering a course on ethnomusicology/ethnodoxology to the worship leaders who are in training was very effective. It brought significant change to their negative and defensive approach to indigenization of Christian worship. From the past experiences in the country many of them had the impression that indigenization of worship only means to imitate the things that Hindus are doing in their worship. This course helped them to understand indigenous worship as God's design, and to see musical and other art forms from every tongue and tribe as worthy to be used for the worship of God.

This training also can help the people to appreciate other people groups and their unique art forms. Very often the churches in Indian cities have a very low esteem for the worship of the local people and their local customs. Teaching a course in ethnomusicology to a group of people in urban contexts will give them a perspective to appreciate local artistic expressions and use some of them in worship. In recent years

there is a tendency among urban churches in India to neglect and look down on local Indian customs. Many Christians find it a matter of pride to say that they do not know local languages and they are a part of a fully Westernized church. Teaching the course in ethnomusicology to a congregation like that will help them to understand indigenous worship as God's design and its significance for the Indian context.

A course in ethnomusicology also will help people to feel proud about their people group and their musical forms. Many of them feel that their musical forms are useless or irrelevant in comparison to the Western worship music that they hear on television channels and CDs. This course can help them to gain a different perspective on worship and help them to offer more meaningful worship by using indigenous expressions rather than imitating Western worship styles, which have so little meaning in their communities.

This training also can be given to all the students in theological seminaries. It is not necessary for the one who takes this course to be a proficient musician. Although it will be ideal to have some musical training, especially to analyse musical forms, it is not necessary. This course can be easily redesigned for a group of students who are not musically skilled but are eager to work among a people group and want to impact their worship. Training in ethnomusicology can significantly help missionaries to study the people groups and make right decisions and make more effective strategies for missions.

Making the course of ethnomusicology a part of the curriculum of theological seminaries in India will make contextualization a reality rather than just academic jargon. Every pastor and church planter needs to have practical skills to study and understand the

people groups so that they can effectively work among them. This training will help them to gain an emic view of the culture and their practices. This will help them to be more effective in the field. This course also can be effective for the people who are working as Bible translators in the field. An ethnomusicology course will help them to understand the local language and its usage more intimately and understand local idioms, proverbs and other cultural expressions.

The course in ethnomusicology can be structured for teaching in local churches to encourage them to develop indigenous worship. Many congregations in the country are looking for worship leaders who can transform their worship into a contemporary Western worship style. Teaching short courses on contextualization and ethnomusicology and practically telling them what they can do to make worship more effective by using indigenous art will immensely help the congregations to strive to be an indigenous worshipping community.

Ethnomusicology training is relevant not only in India but it is a useful tool for ministry all around the world because contextualization of worship is God's design for the church. God expects people of every tongue and tribe to worship Him with all their uniqueness. Ethnomusicology helps people groups all over the world to understand their own cultures and decide on the artistic expressions that they can incorporate in their worship. It is a useful tool for people who are envisioning going to other countries as missionaries. These methods can help the missionaries or pastors to gain an insider view of the culture and serve the Lord with more cultural sensitivity. It helps the worship

leaders of any context to understand the indigenous resources that are available in each people group and incorporate them to worship the Lord more creatively.

Conclusion

Training in ethnomusicology is a means to make contextualization a reality. In the past many attempts at contextualization did not take root in India because pastors and worship leaders were not trained to do it effectively. Many contextualized liturgies were made but most of them never took notice of the huge cultural diversity in the country. Every people group in the country is unique, and they each have unique practices which give them identity. Ethnomusicology is a practical application of contextualization and it teaches the leaders how to proceed in developing indigenous worship. This discipline takes into serious consideration the diversity of each people group and focuses on the smallest divisions within the people groups, spending time in the field to study and analyse their practices.

Different from other contextualized liturgies that were made in some synod meetings of denominational headquarters, ethnomusicology starts from the place where people live. Rather than making and giving a liturgy to the people, it makes the people to develop their own worship service. Ethnomusicologists live in the local community with the people and encourage and direct them to look into their own culture to tap into indigenous artistic expressions of worship. This makes the process of indigenization a people's movement from grass roots upward rather than from the top down. This will

help the people to feel ownership of their church and their worship. It also ensures significant congregational participation. Ethnomusicology is a powerful tool for all Christian ministers who desire to make a significant impact in worship and mission through the local church's involvement.

APPENDIX 1

Course: Applied Ethnomusicology

Pre-course Survey

Teacher –Jacob Joseph

Name of the Student:

1. If you have five minutes to tell someone about meaningful worship: What would you say are the most important components? (Use another Sheet to write your answer)

2. What kind of worship tradition is followed in your mother church?

Liturgical / Non Liturgical

3. What kind of instruments you think is appropriate for Christian worship? Which all instruments you will use if you are leading worship? (Underline all that you think appropriate)

Any Instruments/ Organ/ Keyboard/ Guitar/ Drums/ violin/ Sitar/ Tambura/ Veena/
Dolak/ Sarangi/ Indian hand cymbals/ Flute/ _____ / _____
/ _____ /

4. What Dance forms you think or will use in worship?

Choreography/ Action Song/ Bharatanatyam/ Kathak/ Kuchippudi/ Bangra/ Odissi/
Mohiniattam/ _____ / _____ / _____ /

5. Can we use different art forms that are associated with Hindu / Muslim or other religions in Christian worship?

Yes/ No. Explain –

6. Are there Music, Dance or art form that you think is not biblical to use in worship?

Yes/ No. Explain –

7. As Indians do you think it is appropriate for us to use Western Music for our worship?

Yes/ No – Explain –

8. What is your opinion about using some of the local musical and art forms from your area in worship?

9. What is your opinion about using music from other cultures in worship? Is it useful?

10. What do you think about preaching posture and style in Christian worship? Is it better to stand or sit and preach?

11. What is your opinion physical handling of Bible in Indian Context?



12. What kind of church building do you prefer?

Western  / Indian Style  / Does not matter 

13. What do you think your Denominations view on using Indian music, instruments, Indian Dance forms and other Indigenous arts?

14. Have you ever attended an Indian Christian Satsang or purely an Indian Style of Worship?

15. What are your thoughts about NTC's worship Services? (it will be confidential)

APPENDIX – 2

Post course Survey

Sub: applied Ethnomusicology

Teacher: Jacob Joseph

Name: _____ **(Optional)**

Place: _____ **(Optional)**

Language group: _____ **(Optional)**

- I. What are the most important aspects of Christian worship to you?
- II. As a person who is getting trained to be a worship leader, what are your plans about worship leadership in your place of ministry?
- III. What are the criterions through which you will use the musical forms in worship of your congregation?
- IV. What is your opinion about using indigenous musical forms and musical instruments in worship?
- V. How did the course in Ethnomusicology impact your understanding about the use of indigenous music and musical instruments in worship and missions?
- VI. What are the areas of the course that you see as most useful in you ministry?
- VII. What are the areas in the course that you see as not of much use in ministry?
- VIII. How the audio visuals did impact you?
- IX. Any other Comments/ Suggestions

APPENDIX – 3

DWM

Credit Hours: 2

LUTHER W. NEW JR. THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE
KULHAN P.O, DEHRADUN 248001

INTRODUCTION TO ETHNOMUSICOLOGY/ ETHNODOXOLOGY

Course Objective

1. To develop a biblical understanding of diversity of culture and to develop a biblical foundation for the use of indigenous arts in worship.
2. To create awareness for the students regarding the use of ethnic arts forms and communication media in Christian worship.
3. To prepare students for cross-cultural and multi – cultural ministry through diverse Art forms especially music.
4. To equip the students to analyse cultures and understand their core values and worldviews so that they are trained to approach cultures with sensitivity.
5. To develop interest to ethnic cultural media for the communication of the gospel.

Course Description

- I. What is Christian Worship? - Overview
 - A. Definition –
 - a. Worship
 - b. Contextualization of Christian worship
- II. What is Culture?
 - A. Definition
 - B. Biblical perspective on diversity of culture
 - C. People of God in the pagan world – Old Testament and New Testament understanding of cultural adaptation
- III. Understanding Culture
 - A. Analysis, worldview and etic/ emic
 - B. Cultural analysis – interviewing culture bearers
 - C. Indian culture – an overview with emphasis to national musical styles
- IV. Christian Arts
 - A. Definition
 - B. Anthropology of arts and arts in culture
- V. Ethnomusicology
 - A. Definition – ethnomusicology – ethnodoxology
 - B. Scope of ethnomusicology

- VI. Diverse Musical Styles: Hymns, Bhajan, Kirtan, Rock, Heavy Metal, Celtic, Blues, Jazz and Others
- VII. Research Methods
 - A. Ethnographic method
 - B. Grid group theory
 - C. Participatory method
- VIII. Applied Ethno-arts
- IX. Ethnomusicology as a Tool for Contextualization of Christian Worship
 - A. Role of ethno-arts – songs, instruments, proverbs, storytelling, dance, painting etc.
 - B. Cultural rituals vs. Christian rituals
 - C. Religiously originated cultural social events and their role in Christian worship
- X. Cultural Integration and Adaptation in Local Church's Worship
 - A. Understanding denominational doctrine
 - B. Understanding local culture
 - C. Process of cultural integration

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VITA

Jacob Joseph was born as the oldest child of Mr K.C Joseph and Mrs Mercy Joseph on April 4, 1973 in the Kottayam district of Kerala state in India. He was born and brought up in a Christian family. His father was a gospel worker who worked with India Every Home Crusade for many years. His father was instrumental in bringing him up in the fear of the Lord and encouraged him to serve the Lord. Jacob accepted Jesus as his personal savior and Lord at the age of 16 and committed his life for full-time Christian ministry at the age of 19. He went to North India to a Bible college in Dehradun in 1993 for three months of training and returned to his home town in Kerala for further theological education. The three months that he spent in North India gave him a desire to work in North India. In 1998 after his theological education, he moved back to North India as a teacher in Luther W. New Theological College.

While he was teaching there God opened doors for him to go and study music in United States. He graduated with the Master of Church Music degree from Southern Baptist theological Seminary, Louisville, KY. He also completed his certificate in Ethnomusicology from Payap University, Chiang Mai, Thailand in 2009. God used him to start the School of Worship and Music at Luther W New Theological College and it is the first university accredited church music program in North India. Jacob joined Gordon-Conwell's Doctor of Ministries program in 2010 and plans to graduate in May 2016.

Jacob married Bitha in 1998 and since then they have been living in Dehradun. Jacob and Bitha have four sons, Aaron, Nathan, Ethan and Jaron.